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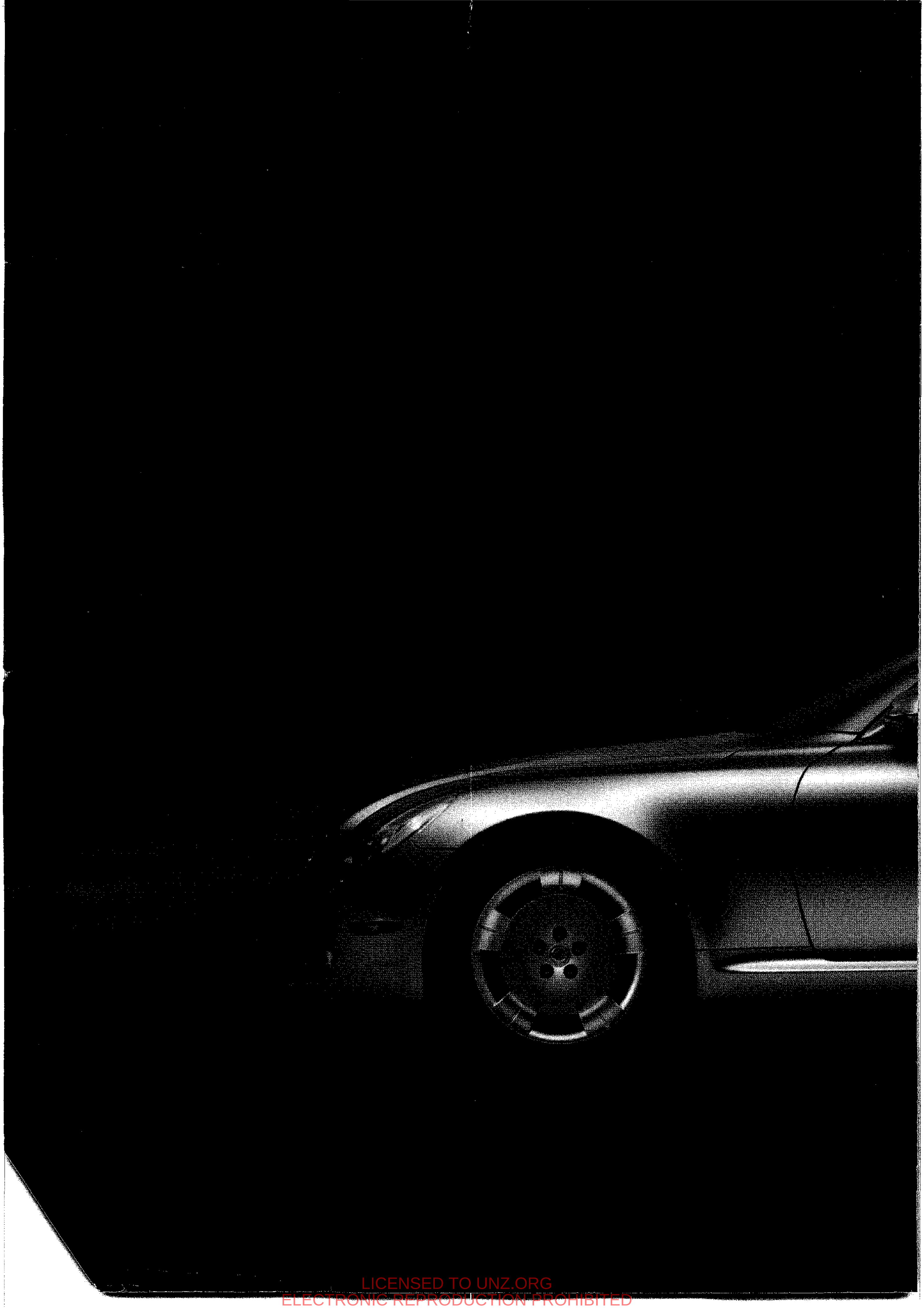
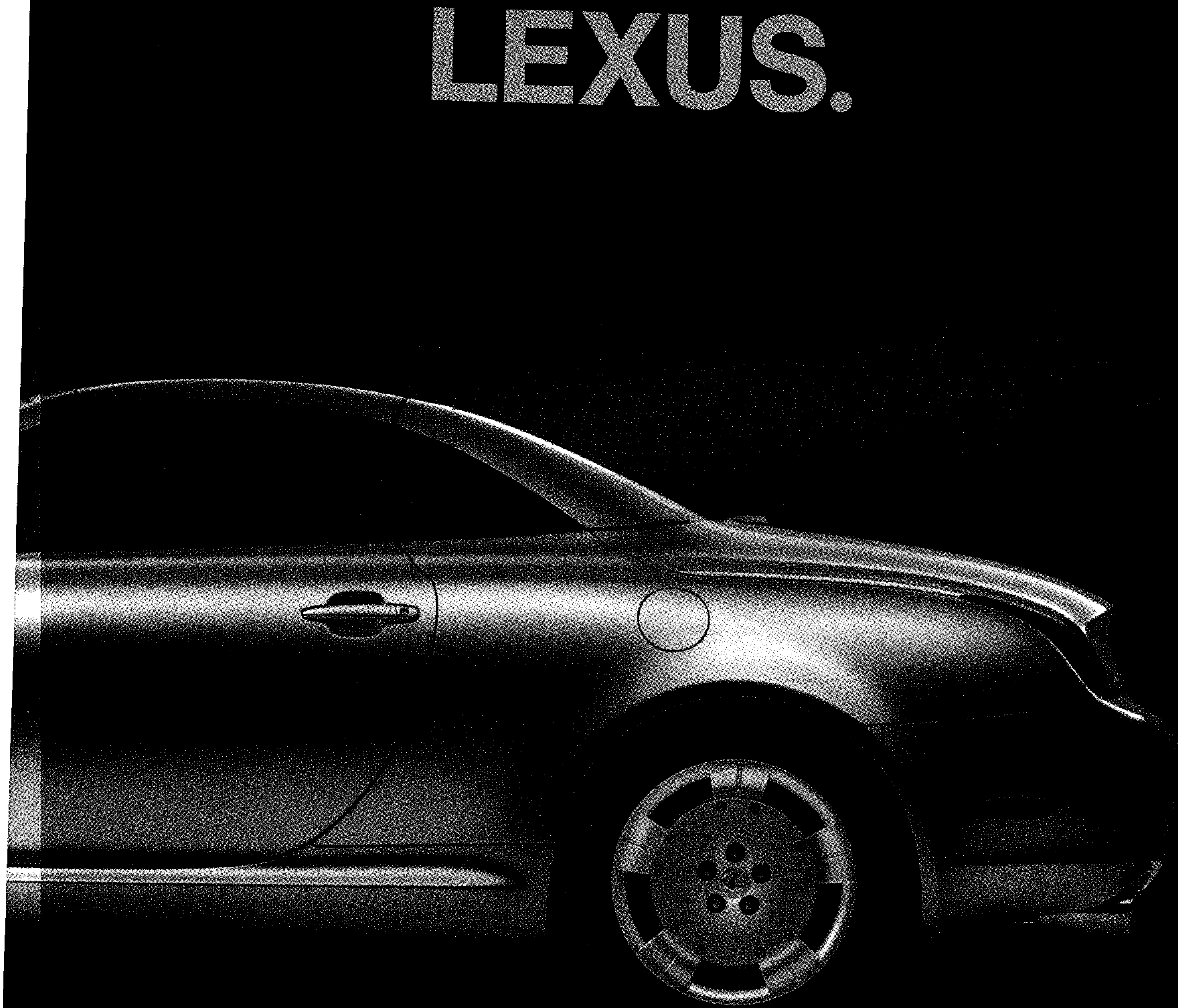
APRIL 23 & 30, 2001

art spiegelu

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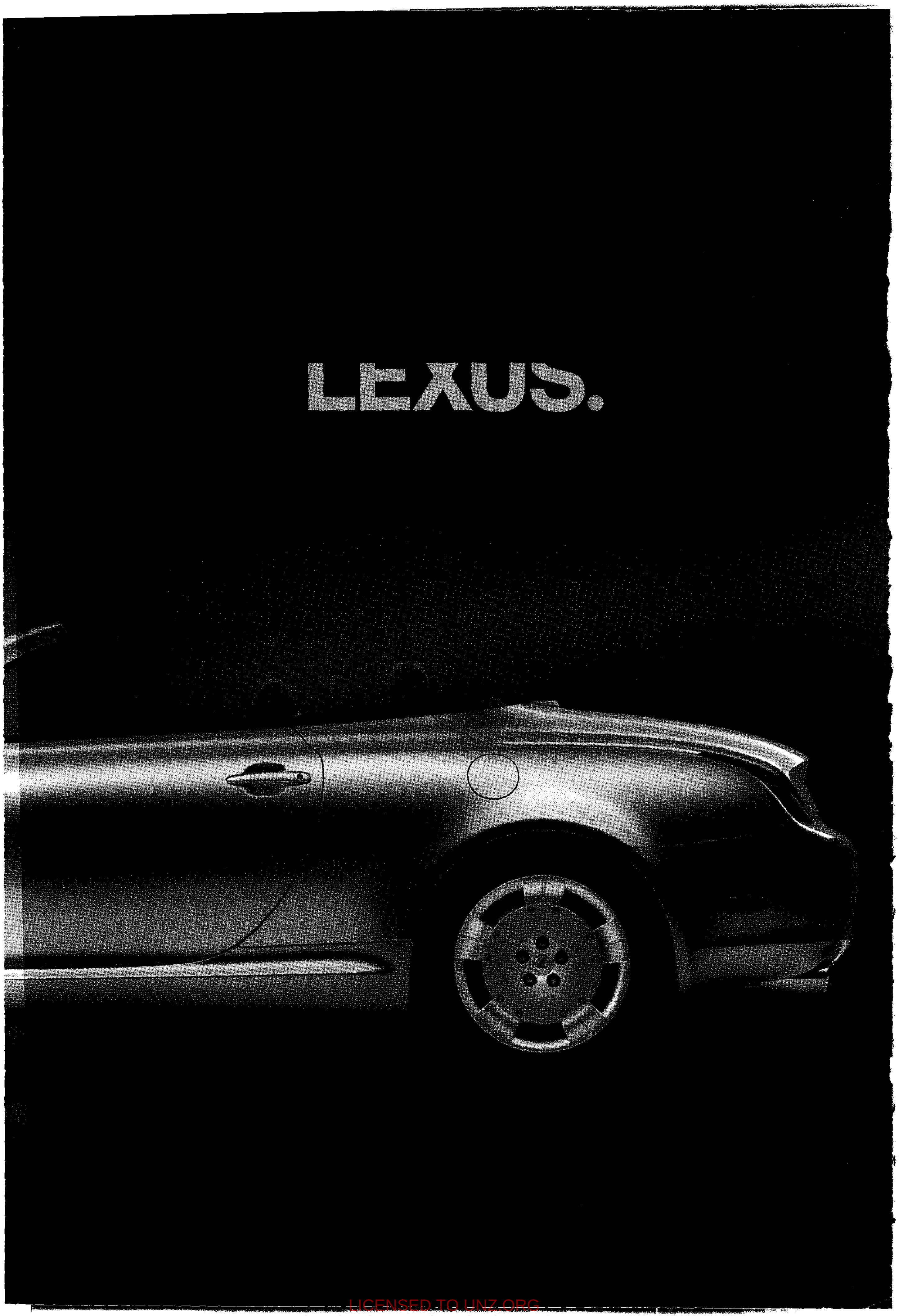
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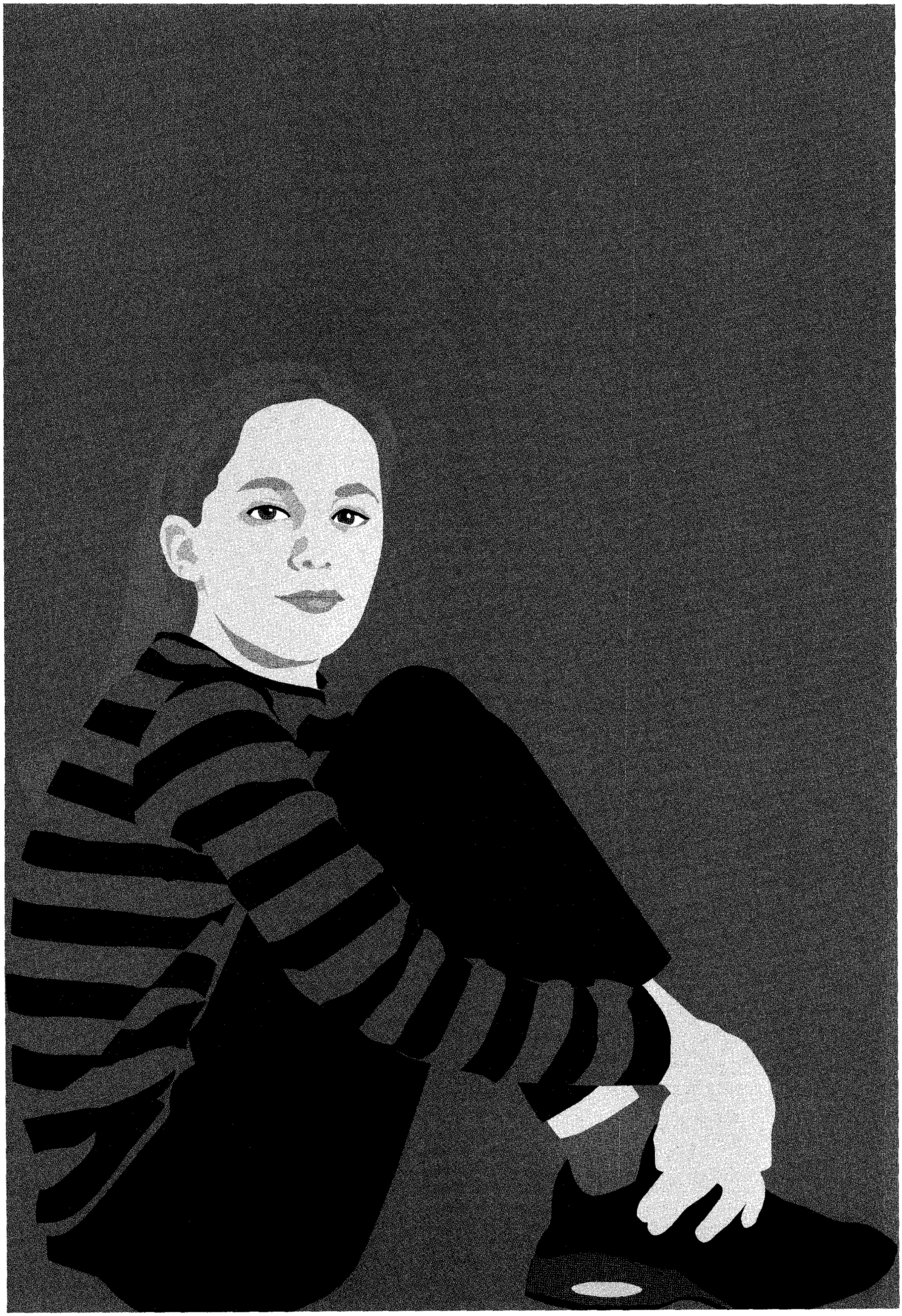

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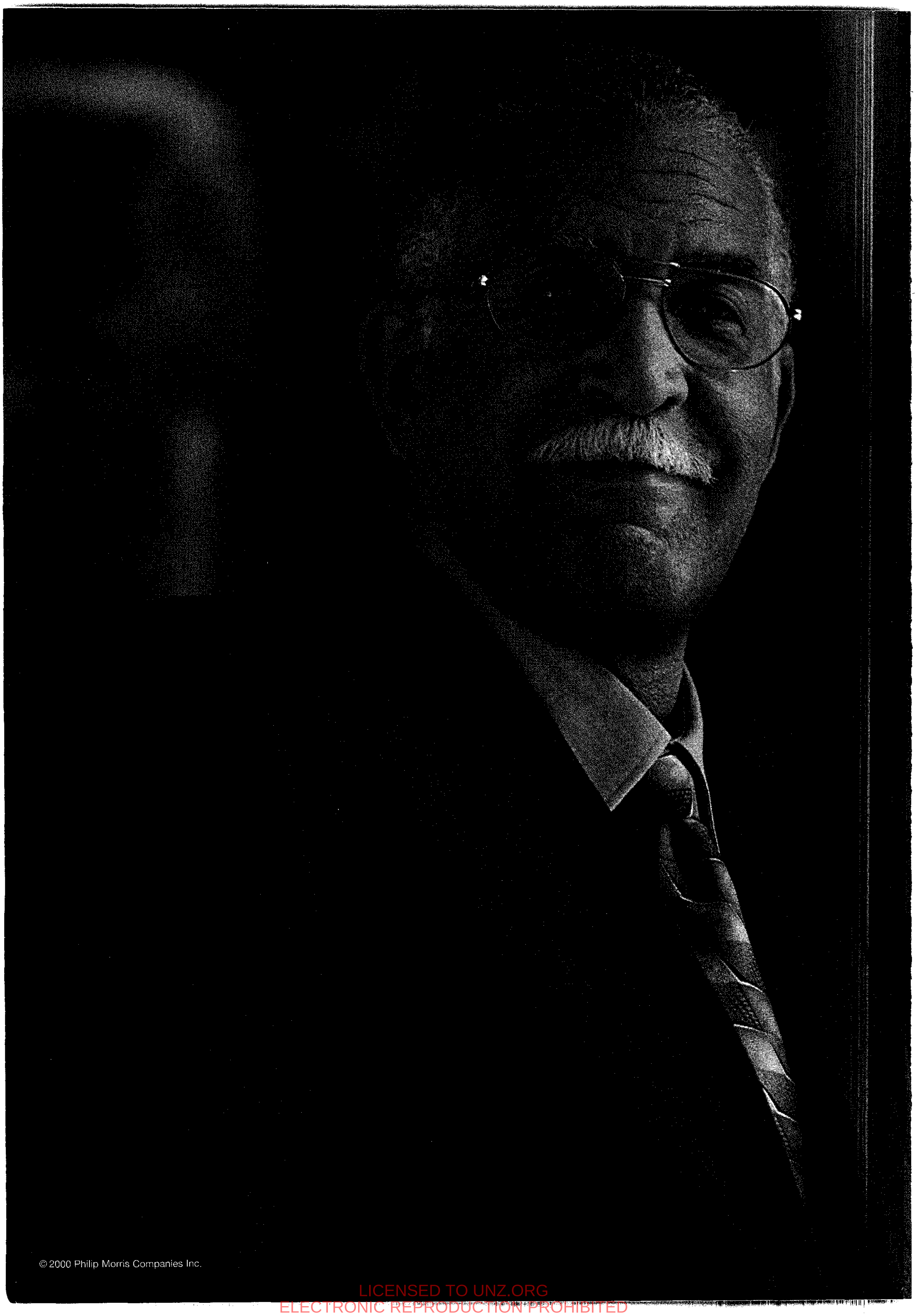

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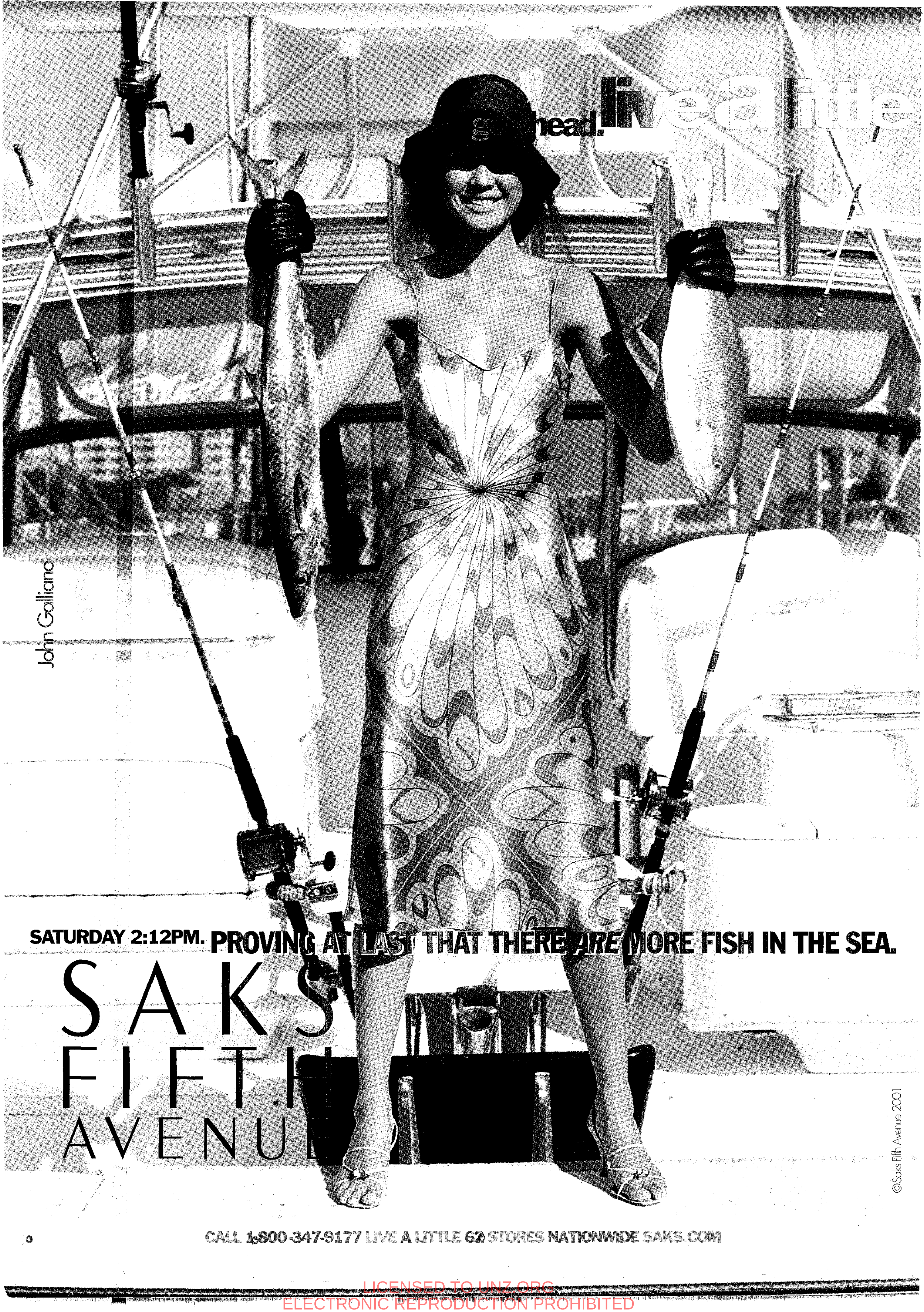

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THE NEW YORKER
THE MONEY ISSUE

APRIL 23 & 30, 2001

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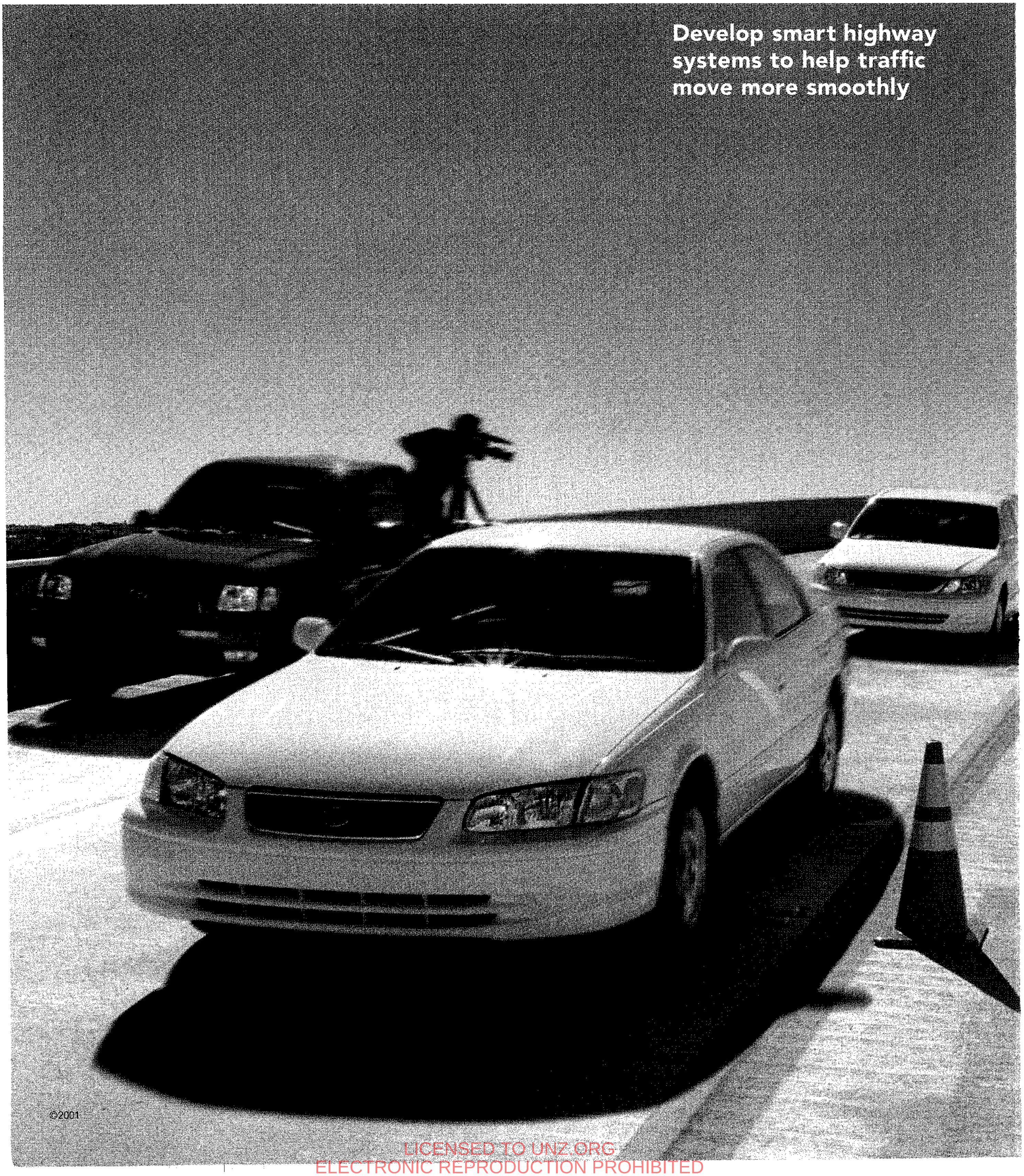
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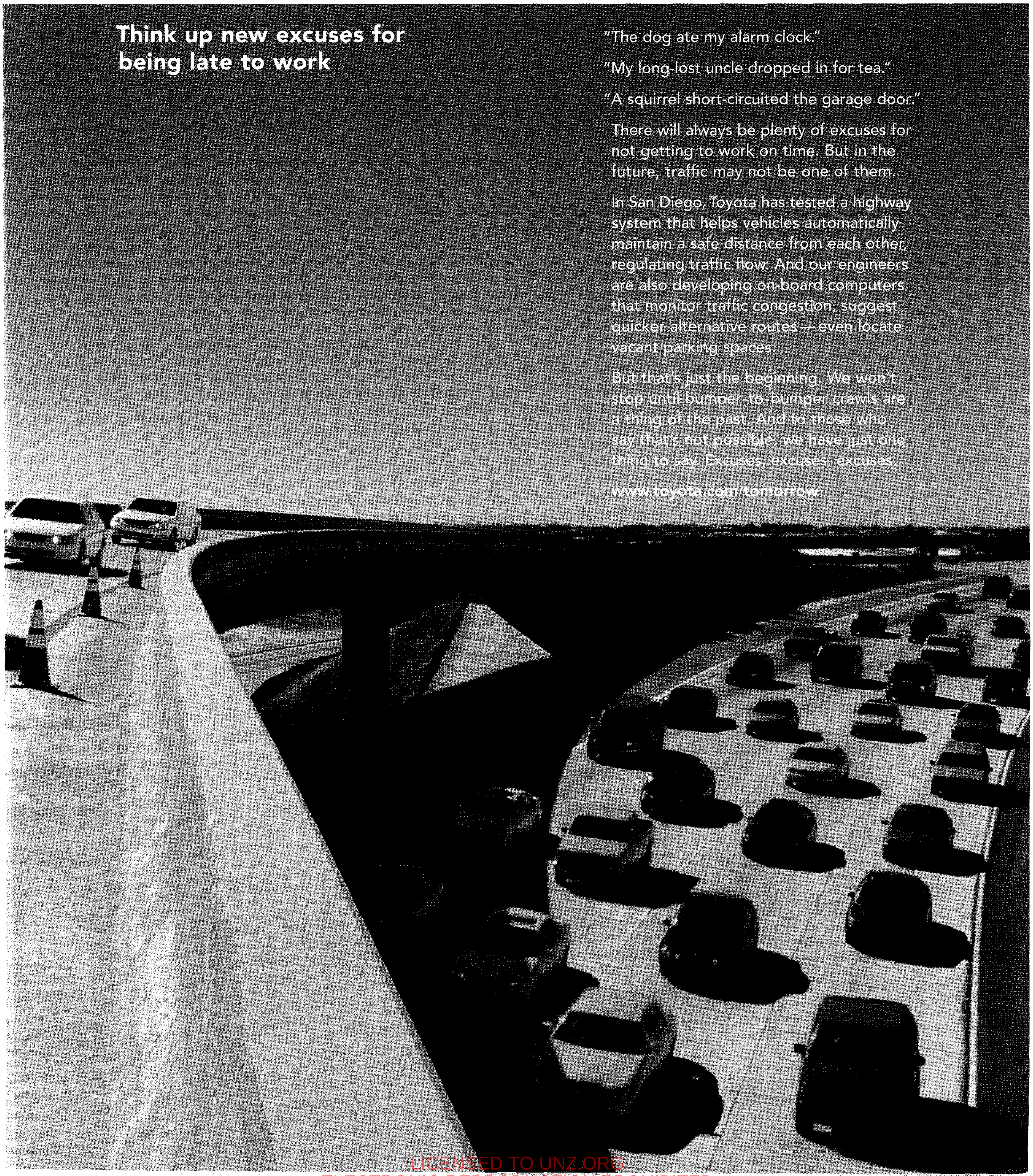

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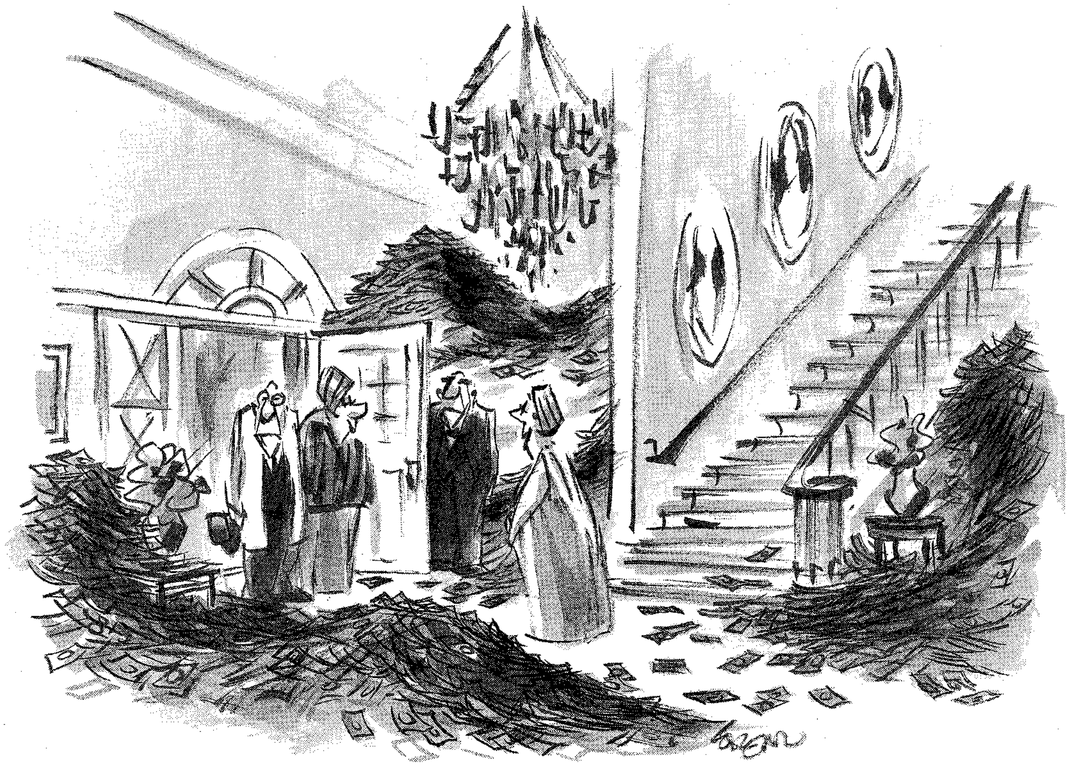

"Forgive the mess. Warren just put everything into cash."

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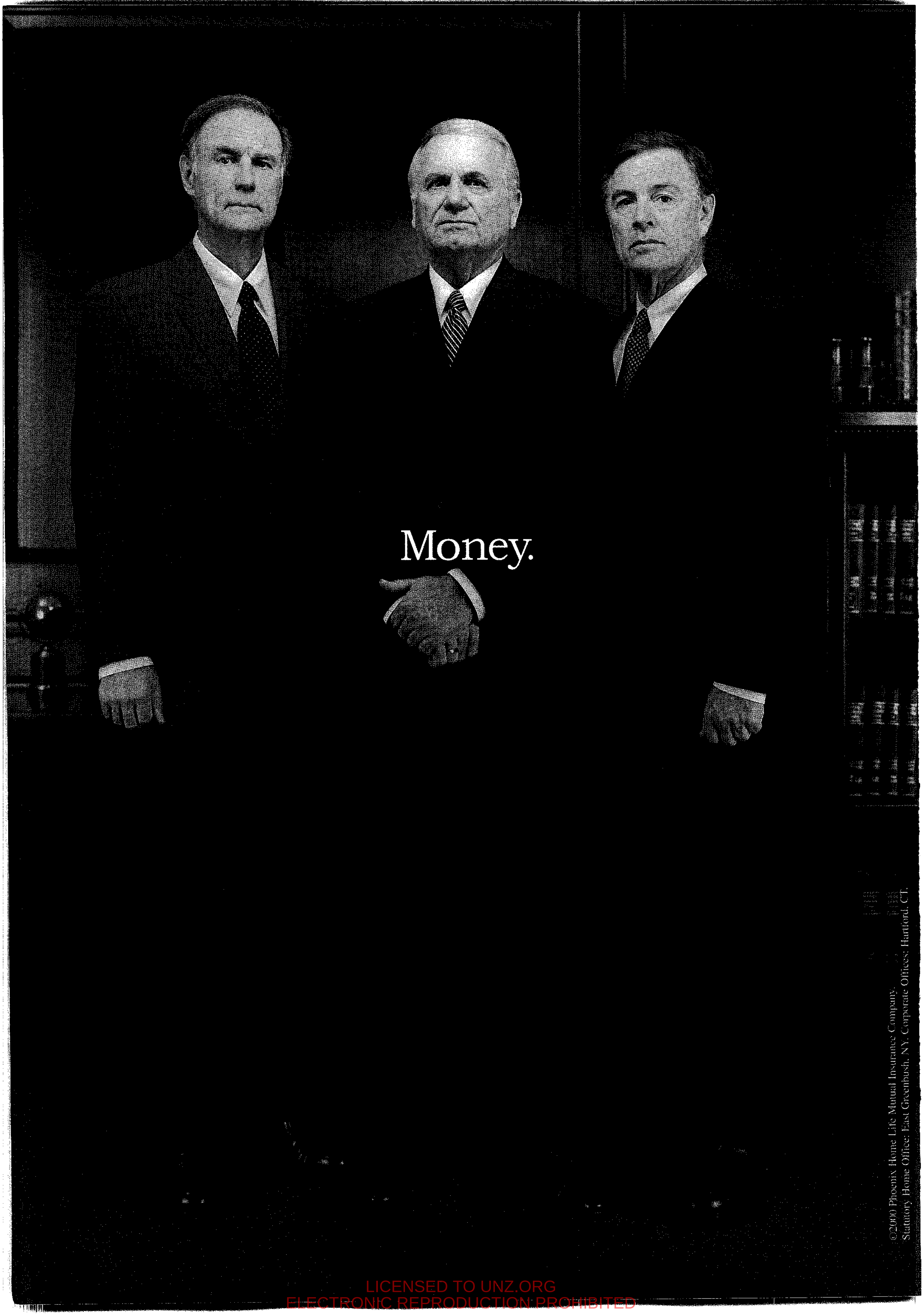

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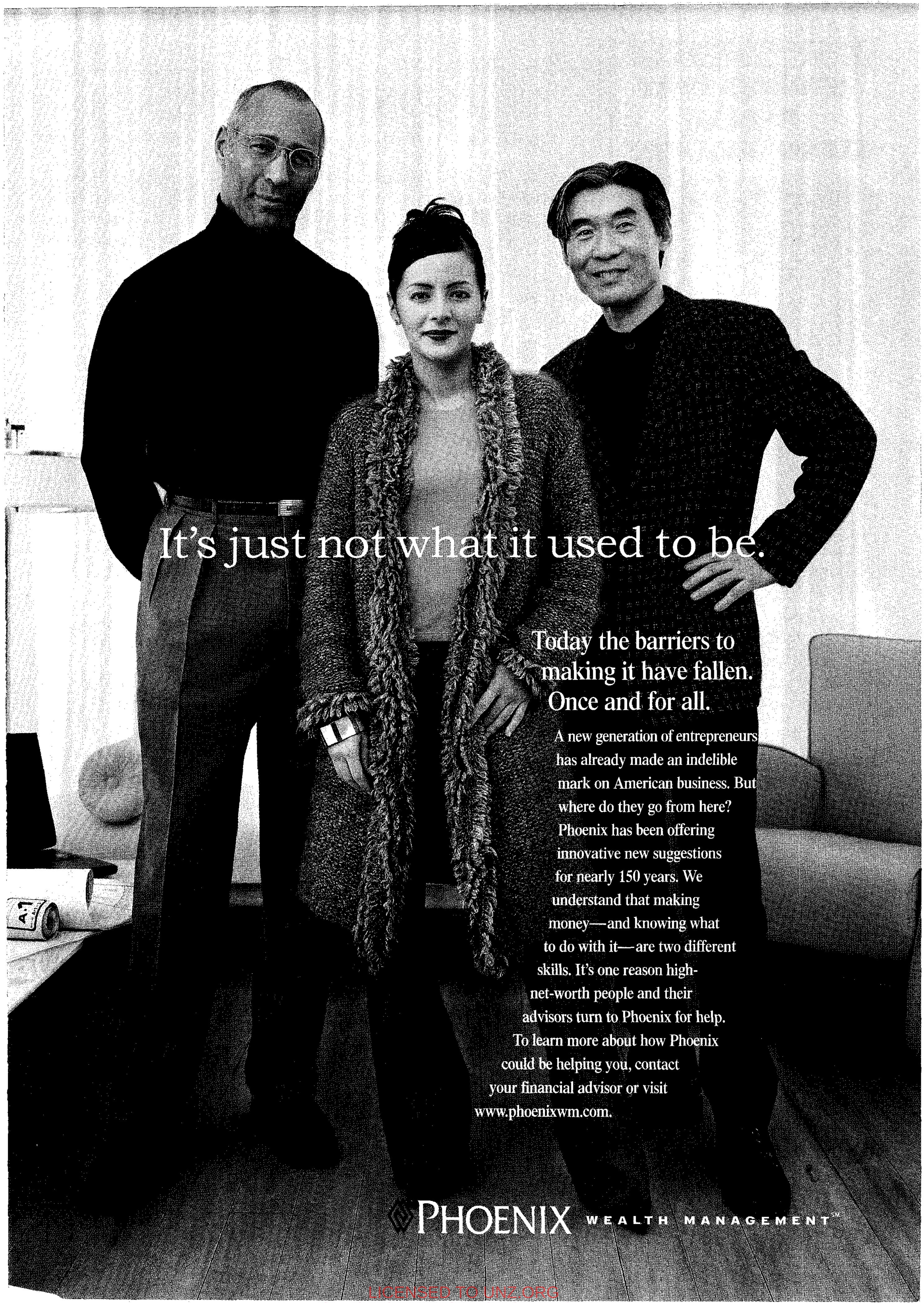
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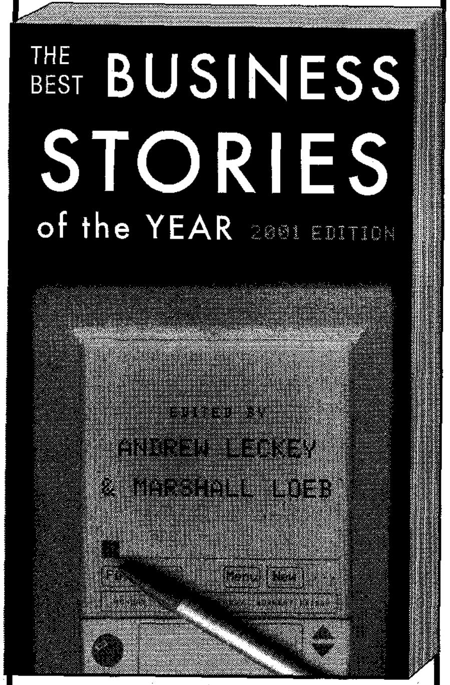

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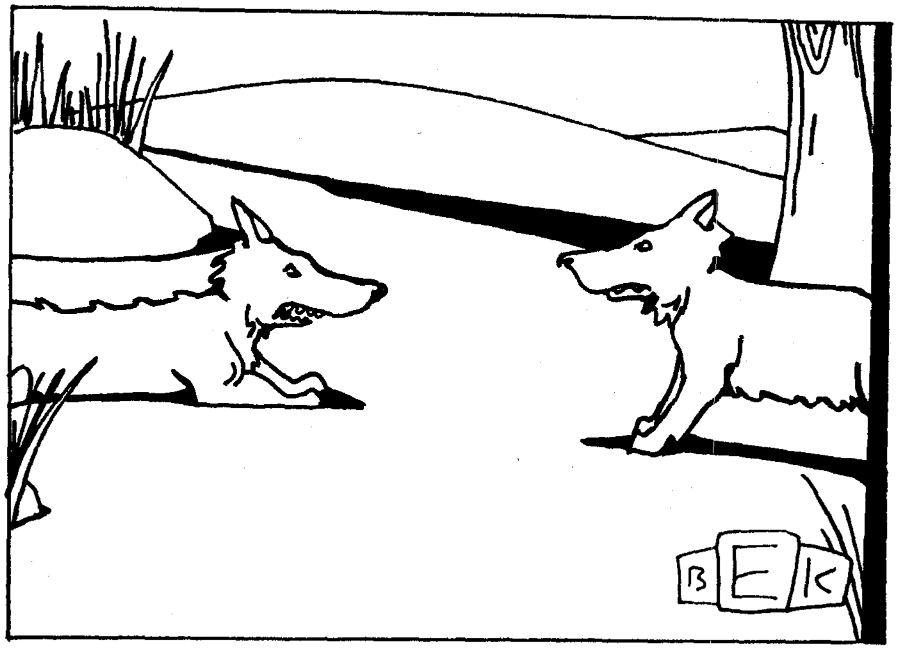
David Samuels ("The Golden Pyramid," p. 168) is at work on a novel. ♦



"I don't think good huffing and puffing can be taught."

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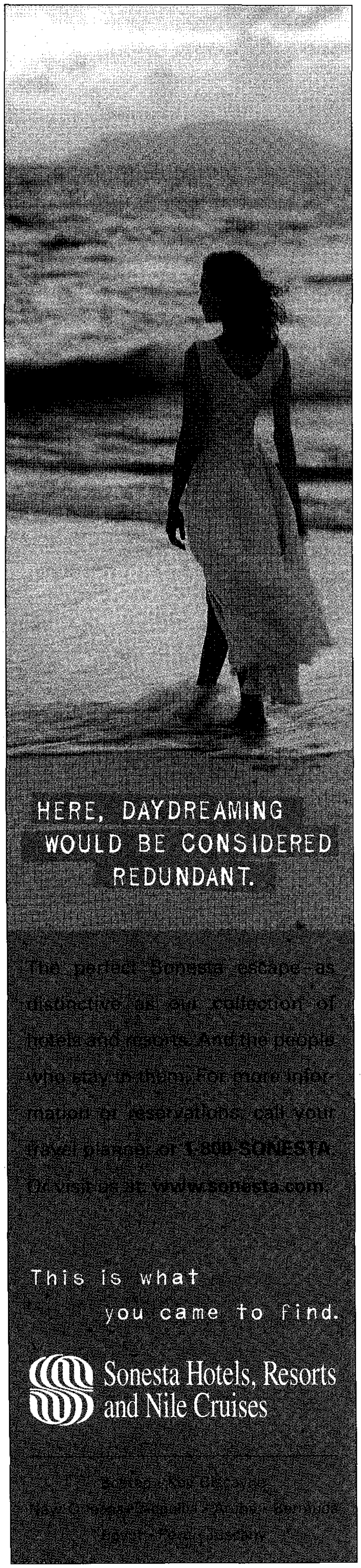

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THE MAIL

MEETING THE ENEMY

Tom Philpott's "The Prisoner" (April 2nd) chillingly documents the torture that the American Green Beret Jim Thompson endured at the hands of his Vietnamese captors. Their behavior must be condemned. Nevertheless, readers, particularly those too young to clearly recall the Vietnam War in its entirety, might have benefitted from a few paragraphs that placed Thompson's ordeal in context. Some discussion of the fate of the Vietnamese "enemy," both soldiers and civilians, acknowledging that American pilots were raining death from the skies, and that non-combatants were killed far more often than soldiers were, would have been useful; so would some mention of the torture of prisoners by the U.S. and its South Vietnamese allies. Otherwise, a reader might be forgiven for seeing Thompson—a "hero," we are reminded—as the only victim in this story, and the constant harping of his captors about American wrongdoing as the simple psychological torture he found it to be. The Vietnam War was fought with criminal brutality on all sides. It was the United States, however, that sabotaged peace talks, invaded Vietnam, and turned the full force of its weapons of mass destruction on the land and its people. The Vietnamese had no designs on our turf. Had ours been the ravaged country, I wonder how well their captured soldiers would have fared.

Milton Mankoff
Associate Professor of Sociology
Queens College, CUNY
Flushing, N.Y.

WHARTON IN SUMMER

Claudia Roth Pierpont's discussion of "Beatrice Palmato," the fragment of a story of father-daughter incest found in Edith Wharton's papers, is fascinating (A Critic at Large, April 2nd). But, by focussing on Wharton's short stories, she overlooks her most developed exploration of the incest theme: the novella "Summer," a sensual and risky work. The protagonist is a country girl who fends off the sexual advances of her guardian and father figure, only to marry him after becoming pregnant during a brief encounter with a young man from the city. "Summer" was published in 1917, during Wharton's involvement in the war effort, and apparently prefigures the emergence of the Palmato figure by several years. Wharton had a close bond with her own father, who introduced her to literature, a bond she intensified and grappled with in her fiction; as Pierpont suggests, she was more alive and honest in her writing than in her life outside it. Any portrayal of this side of her requires a look at "Summer."

Kelly Sullivan
Livermore, Calif.

THE PRICE OF ADVICE

James Surowiecki suggests taking away some of the incentives—the cable-TV appearances, the buzz—that today's misguided market analysts have for making bombastic predictions, as though fostering objectivity were a good thing (The Talk of the Town, March 19th). But the current restrictions on analysts taking positions in companies they cover, in the name of avoiding insider-trading abuses, hasn't made their advice any better. I wonder if analysts' investigative vigor, which Surowiecki finds wanting, might not be improved if they were required to follow their own advice, and invest a percentage of their earnings according to their buy and sell ratings. The trades could be executed by their employers at the same time as those placed for their customers. Making analysts bear the weight of their research and pronouncements, and share the pain, might even give them a sense of public responsibility.

Alan Chesler
San Antonio, Texas

•

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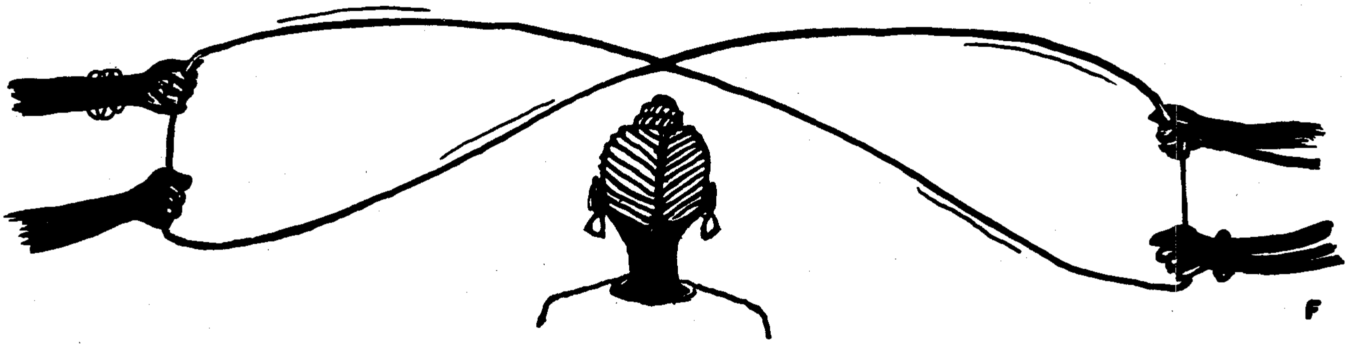
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER
The musical. With a score by Don Schlitz and a book by Ken Ludwig. Scott Ellis is the director. In previews through April 25. Opens April 26 at 6:30. (Minskoff, 200 W. 45th St. 307-4100.)

CAVEMAN
The latest play from the pen of Richard Maxwell. In previews through April 24. Opens April 25 at 7:30. (SoHo Rep, 46 Walker St. 479-7979.)

THE DEAD EYE BOY
Lili Taylor leads the cast in a drama by Angus MacLachlan, about a woman trying to escape a past filled with drug abuse and violence. In previews through April 20. Opens April 21 at 8. (MCC Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 727-7765.)

ELI'S COMIN'
A musical inspired by the songs of Laura Nyro, co-created by Diane Paulus and Bruce Buschel. In previews. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-0303.)

FORTY-SECOND STREET
Michael Cumpsty, Christine Ebersole, Mary Testa, and Jonathan Freeman star in a revival of the 1980 musical comedy. In previews. (Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

THE GARDEN OF FRAU HESS
The Jewish Repertory Theatre presents a drama by first-time playwright Milton F. Marcus, about the relationship between a Nazi's wife and a concentration-camp prisoner who becomes her gardener. Previews April 21-28. Opens April 29 at 7. (Duke Theatre, 229 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

THE GATHERING
Hal Linden portrays a Holocaust survivor in Arje Shaw's drama about three generations of a Jewish family. Rebecca Taylor is the director. In previews. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

GEORGE GERSHWIN ALONE
A one-man portrait with music, written and performed by Hershey Felder and directed by Joel Zwick. In previews through April 29. Opens April 30 at 7. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 349-6200.)

ICELAND
From the playwright and performer Roger Guenveur Smith and the composer Marc Anthony Thompson (who collaborated on "A Huey P. Newton Story"), a work in progress about exile and catastrophe, both natural and man-made. Two performances only: April 20-21 at 8. (BAM's Harvey Playhouse, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1				

KING HEDLEY II
August Wilson's new play revisits the locale (Pittsburgh's Hill District) and some of the characters from his 1995 drama, "Seven Guitars." Brian Stokes Mitchell leads the cast. In previews through April 28. Opens April 29 at 6. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

MADAME MELVILLE
Macaulay Culkin is a fifteen-year-old American student and Joely Richardson his French teacher, in a drama by Richard Nelson, set in nineteen-sixties Paris. In previews. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

PERFORMANCE NOW! FESTIVAL
The Public Theatre's celebration of new works continues, with performances by Howard Fishman and Heather Woodbury (April 18), Colleen Werthmann and Jen Nails (April 20), Madeleine Oknek & Company (April 21), and Kirsten Childs (April 30), as well as an evening of eight new musical works from the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center (April 23), all at 8:30. (Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

THE PRODUCERS
Matthew Broderick and Nathan Lane star in Mel Brooks's musical version of his 1968 movie, under the direction of Susan Stroman. Two previews on April 18. Opens April 19 at 6:30. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

RAVE MOM, OR: ONE WOMAN'S MID-LIFE CRISIS IN THE LAST YEAR OF THE 20TH CENTURY
Ann Magnuson's new one-woman show, a work in progress. April 19-21 and April 25-29 at 7:30. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

SINCERITY FOREVER
A Bat Theatre Company revival of Mac Wellman's 1991 play. Opens April 26 at 10. (Flea Theatre, 41 White St., between Broadway and Church St. 226-2407.)

THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET
Shakespeare's play, adapted and directed by Peter Brook. Preview on April 24. Opens April 25 at 7:30 and continues through May 6. (BAM's Harvey Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100.)

UNCLE BOB
In a new play by Austin Pendleton, George Morfogen portrays a man dying of AIDS and Gale Harold his homophobic nephew. In previews through April 22. Opens April 23 at 7. (SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 239-6200.)

URINETOWN: THE MUSICAL
A musical comedy by Mark Hollmann and Greg Kotis, about a city in a state of ecological disaster. John Rando is the director. In previews. (American Theatre of Actors, 314 W. 54th St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
At the very least, the entrepreneurs of this gleeful nihilism (book by Keythe Farley and Brian Flemming, music and lyrics by Laurence O'Keefe, direction by Scott Schwartz) have the courage of their lack of convictions. It's a kind of "My Fair Bat Boy," in which a half-bat, half-man—memorably played by Deven May, as a cross between Freud's Wolf Man, Michael Crawford's Phantom, and Jerry Lewis's spastic—emerges from his childhood cave into adult bourgeois life. But the musical world he enters is one of darkness, not light, of ironies, not idealism, where plot is a history of abdications and song extolls the emptiness of all the standard credos—Christianity, family, community, love, redemption—and of the musical itself. It's a jejune vision, but a smart, playful, and funny one nonetheless. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/9/01.) (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

BELLS ARE RINGING
Faith Prince and Marc Kudisch lead the cast in a revival of the 1956 Betty Comden–Adolph Green–Jule Styne musical. Tina Landau is the director. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

BLAST!
A musical extravaganza, which evolved from the drum-and-bugle corps Star of Indiana. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

THE BOOK OF LIZ
In the latest comedy by the brother-and-sister team of Amy and David Sedaris, Ms. Sedaris portrays the sweating, mousy Elizabeth, a demure Puritan believer from the religious Squeamish Community who goes on a picaresque adventure after being refused the honor of organizing the Chastity Parade. In the course of her travels, she gets to wear a Planter's-peanut outfit and work in a restaurant called Plymouth Crock, which is populated entirely, it seems, by gay A.A. members. She even seeks medical help for her perspiration problem. As comic drama, it's sort of an amateur fizzle, but it does offer the Sedarises the opportunity to tell some very good jokes in silly costumes and to bask in the smug downtown certainty of a soiled world. (4/9/01) (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 239-6200.)

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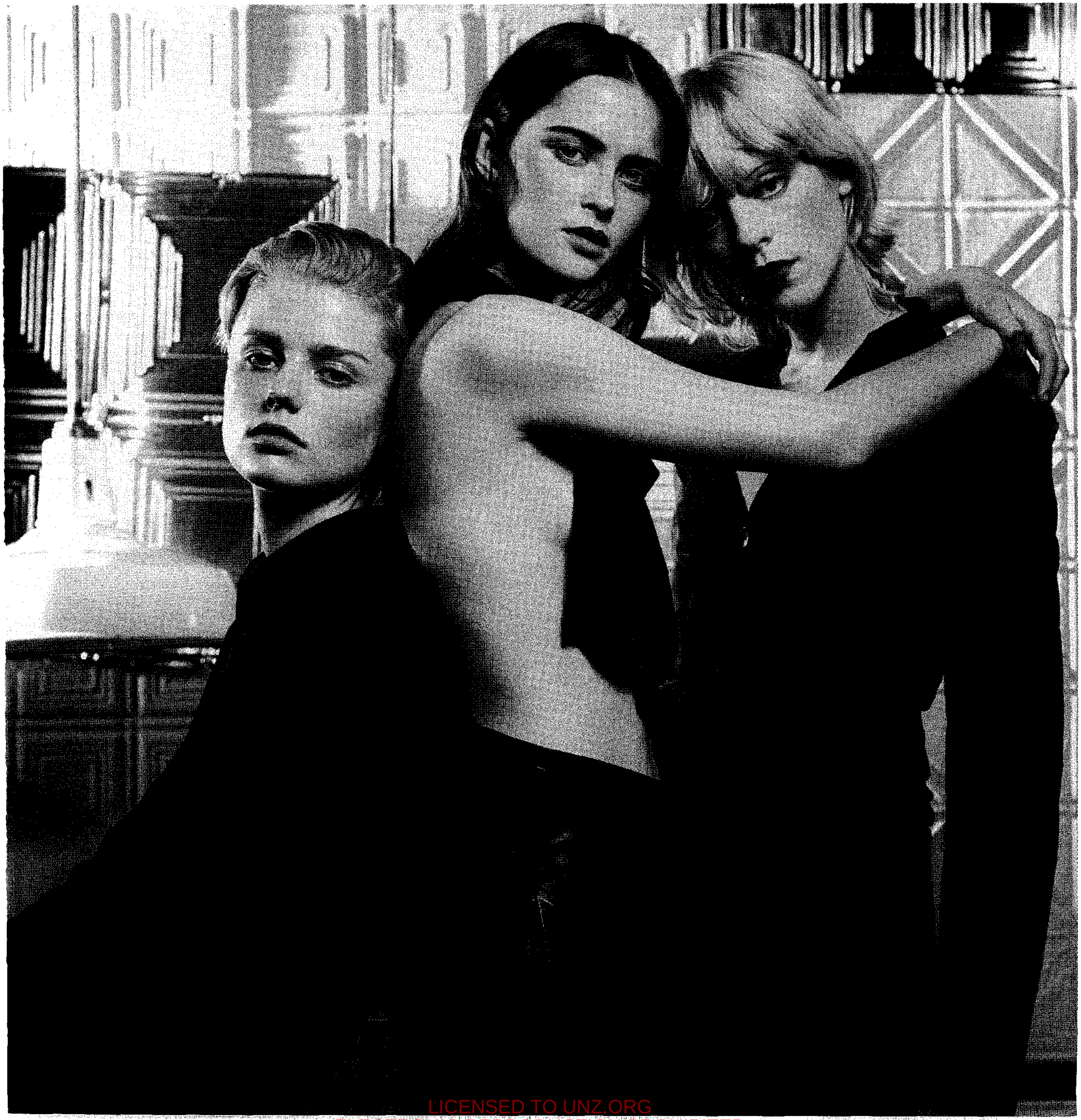

Rosie Perez, in "References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot," by José Rivera.

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

A CLASS ACT
Ed Kleban's life following his success as the lyricist of "A Chorus Line" is the basis of this musical. With songs by Mr. Kleban and a book by Linda Kline and Lonny Price. Mr. Price is the director. (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

CODE OF THE WEST
Mark R. Giesser's play about the San Franciscan Joshua A. Norton, who proclaimed himself emperor of the United States and protector of Mexico in the eighteen-fifties. (McGinn/Cazale, Broadway at 76th St. 279-4200.)

CRIMES OF THE HEART
Garry Hynes directs a Second Stage revival of Beth Henley's 1981 play, starring Enid Graham, Amy Ryan, and Mary Catherine Garrison. (307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

DESIGN FOR LIVING
To be great, comedy must be cruel, and that is why it is usually written by the young. Though he wrote it when he was only thirty-four, Noël Coward's (then scandalous) 1933 tale of an insouciant ménage à trois (Jennifer Ehle, Dominic West, and Alan Cumming) is more a lecture masquerading as theatre; it's too schematic and too self-important for the cruelty to play out in surprising ways. Still, Joe Mantello's production is superbly cast and well focussed. (3/26/01) (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300.)

FOLLIES
A Roundabout Theatre Company revival of James Goldman and Stephen Sondheim's 1971 musical, starring Blythe Danner, Gregory Harrison, Judith Ivey, and Treat Williams. Matthew Warchus is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

THE GOOD THIEF
Brian D'Arcy James portrays a petty criminal who botches a heist, in a drama by Conor McPherson. (45 Bleecker Street, at 45 Bleecker St. 307-4100.)

HOORAY FOR ICEBOY
The latest comedy from the Adobe Theatre Company, in which explorers introduce one of their discoveries to the theatre world in the forties. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 279-4200.)

THE INVENTION OF LOVE
Tom Stoppard's witty, challenging account of the classicist and poet A. E. Housman and the love that not only dared not speak its name but didn't even have one until 1895 (when the word "homosexual" was coined). Jack O'Brien's well-directed, lucid production features a sumptuous set by Bob Crowley and some fine acting, especially by Richard Easton as the elder/dead Housman—he parses every sentence and joke so that the audience is never at sea—and Robert Sean Leonard as the young classicist in love. David Harbour also turns in a vivid portrait as the sporty object of Housman's platonic affection. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

JANE EYRE
John Caird and Paul Gordon's musical is respectful of and faithful to Brontë's original, but it needs to be brilliant and piercing, and it isn't. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

JUDGMENT AT NUREMBERG
Maximilian Schell and George Grizzard lead the cast in the Abby Mann drama. John Tillinger is the director. (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6280.)

LACKAWANNA BLUES
Ruben Santiago-Hudson performs his memory play about growing up in Lackawanna, New York, in the fifties. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

MNEMONIC
For sheer theatrical aplomb—the exhilarating marriage of the surreal body to the surreal intellect—nothing can top the latest show by the actor and director Simon McBurney and his Theatre de Complicite. With startling images, sounds, and shifts of focus, three stories unravel with the lucidity, the detachment, and the surprise of a Magritte to remind us that we ourselves are a work of fiction, and that remembering is an act of imagination. (4/9/01) (John Jay College, 899 Tenth Ave., at 58th St. 239-6200.)

NEWYORKERS
A satirical revue about life in Manhattan, by Glenn Slater (lyrics) and Stephen Weiner (music). Christopher Ashley is the director. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

NO NIGGERS, NO JEWS, NO DOGS
John Henry Redwood's new play, about a cycle of rape and murder visited on a black family in North Carolina in the first half of the last century. Although the plot twists are a bit obvious, Redwood's characters are strong and believable, and tragedy doesn't overwhelm them. As in his earlier work, "The Old Settler," their concerns are personal enough to make this far more than another "issue" play. Among a fine ensemble, Adrienne Carter's angry teen-ager and Marcus Naylor's disillusioned father are particularly memorable. And the director Israel Hicks has a fine eye for detail. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes April 22.)

NOW THAT COMMUNISM IS DEAD,
MY LIFE FEELS EMPTY
Richard Foreman's forty-eighth play has many of the whacked-out elements audiences have come to expect from the father of downtown theatre, but it doesn't have anything new, really. Foreman's plays used to be enigmatic, exhilarating blows to the brain. With this latest work, the formula has got so comfortable that it seems like shtick. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650.)

ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST
Dale Wasserman's severely dated adaptation of Ken Kesey's 1962 novel—a broad allegory, set in a mental hospital, about the perils of nonconformity—is a quaint relic, but as staged by Chicago's excellent Steppenwolf Theatre it's a well-acted one. Gary Sinise leads the cast, as the incorrigible mental patient Randle P. McMurphy. Terry Kinney is the director. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

PASSION PLAY
Peter Nichols' 1981 dark comedy, about a couple destroyed by an affair. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100.)

PEARL THEATRE COMPANY
Presenting Jean-François Regnard's 1708 comedy, "A Will of His Own," in a new translation by Michael Feingold. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY
A stage adaptation by Joe O'Byrne of Oscar Wilde's novel. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

THE PLAY ABOUT THE BABY
In Edward Albee's new play, an older couple provide a harsh taste of what life has in store for a young couple with a new baby: the ravages of adulthood, the tidal wave of troubles and injuries that come with time. Brian Murray and Marian Seldes, two veterans who are rarely less than riveting, make the most of Albee's sharp, enigmatic writing; their highly stylized, virtuosic performances here are stunning. David Esbjornson directed. (2/19 & 26/01) (Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

REFERENCES TO SALVADOR DALI
MAKE ME HOT
Rosie Perez portrays a lonely army wife whose husband suffers from Gulf War syndrome, in a new play by José Rivera. (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400. Closes April 22.)

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW
Rather than a revival of Richard O'Brien's 1973 musical, a glam tribute to fifties horror flicks, Christopher Ashley's production is an unsexy and oddly earnest homage to the 1975 cult-movie adaptation. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

SAINT LUCY'S EYES
Ruby Dee portrays an abortionist in Memphis during the Civil Rights movement, in a drama

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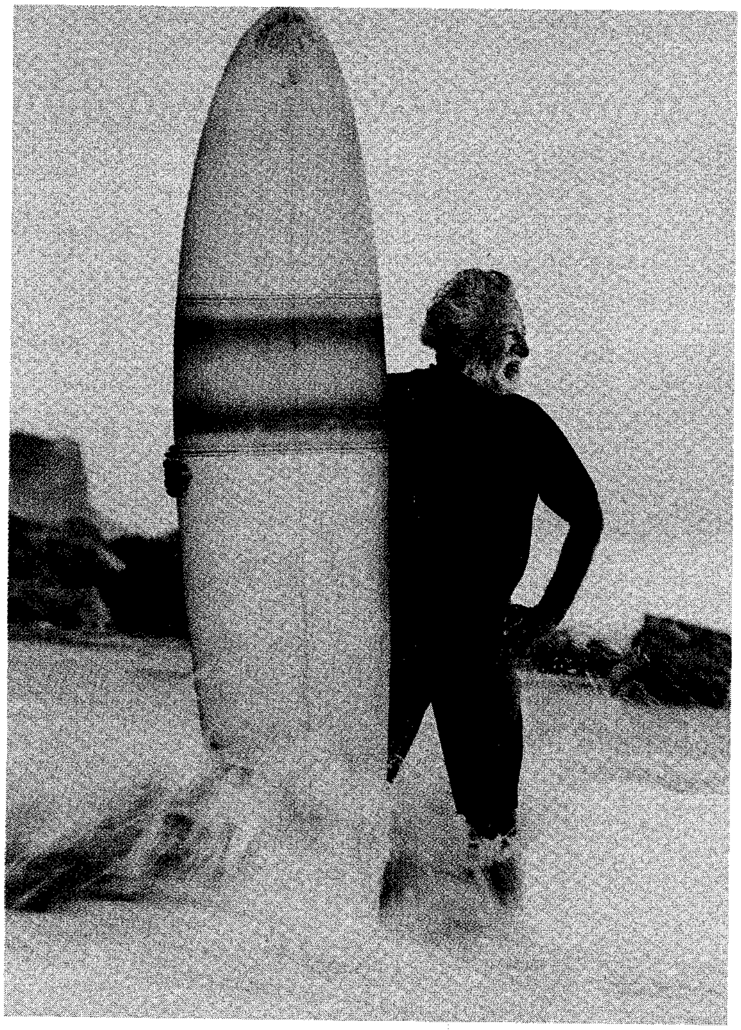

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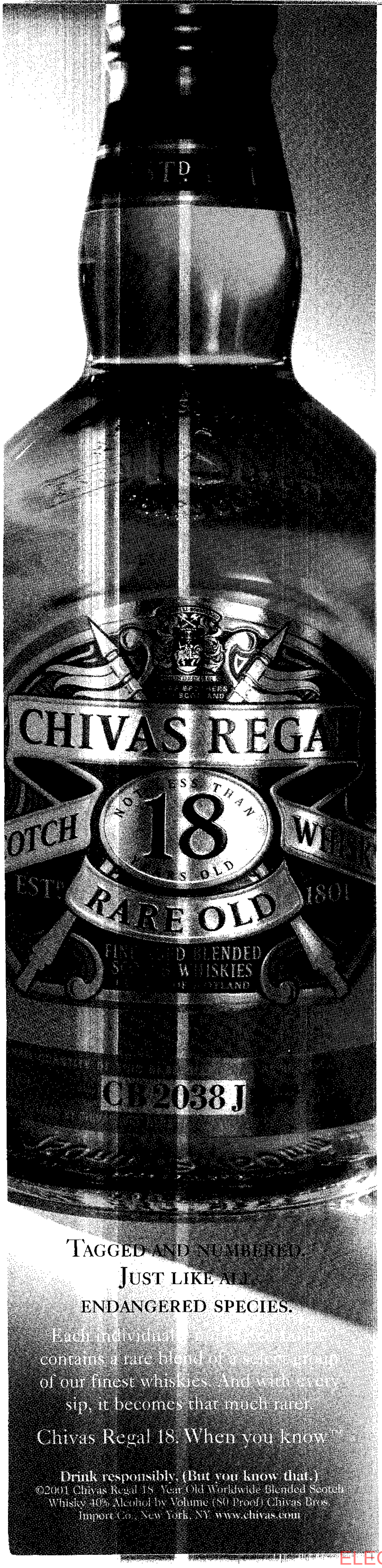

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by Bridgette A. Wimberly. (Women's Project Theatre, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200. Closes April 22.)

THE SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE
Lily Tomlin is back on Broadway in the one-woman, thirteen-character show written for her by her longtime collaborator, Jane Wagner, and what's not to love about that? Tomlin is terrific—moving, funny, and as lithe and vibrant as she was when she first performed the show here, fifteen years ago. This is a chance to see a remarkable life force in action. (11/27/00) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

SERVICEMEN
The New Group's latest, by Evan Smith, starts out as an interesting, and funny, examination of the Second World War's home front from the perspective of a jaded socialite and a gay man who puzzles at the contradiction of being drafted to fight for freedom. Unfortunately, the evening disintegrates into soap opera, complete with sloppy, melodramatic direction. The cast do their best, though; Steven Polito's portrayal of a drag queen is the show's most redeeming feature: he delivers several forties standards beautifully and makes all he can out of the script. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

SEUSSICAL
For all the whimsy of Theodor Geisel's doggerel, what's missing in this relentlessly cute musical by the team of Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty is mayhem and magic. With the exception of one gentle and winning performance—by Kevin Chamberlin as Horton the Elephant, who gets conned into hatching an egg—it's a show with curiously little charm. (12/25/00 & 1/1/01) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

A SKULL IN CONNEMARA
The middle play in Martin McDonagh's Leenane trilogy. Like the others, it is permeated by violence, decay, death, and humor—humor that, in this case, is predominantly of the patronizing, stage-Irish variety and saturated in alcohol. Gordon Edelstein directed. (3/5/01) (Gramercy, 127 E. 23rd St. 777-4900.)

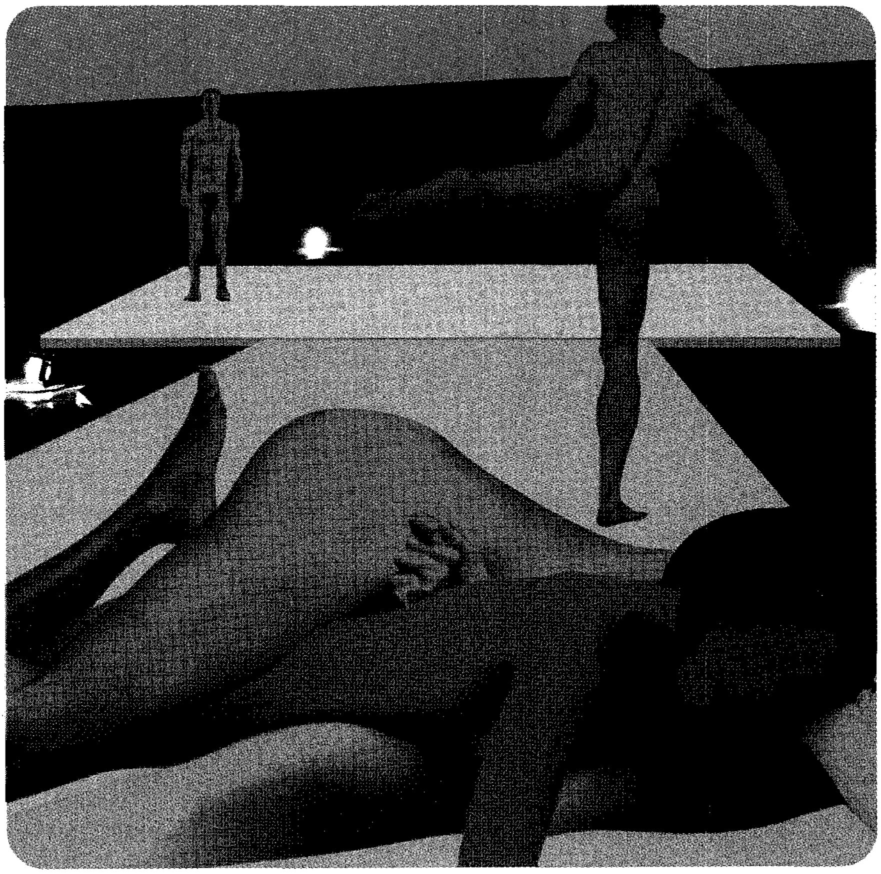
SO LONG AGO I CAN'T REMEMBER: A DIVINE COMEDY
The latest multimedia production by the troupe Gale Gates et al. takes its inspiration from Dante. (37 Main St., Brooklyn. 718-522-4597.)

STONES IN HIS POCKETS
Marie Jones's play, which began life in Belfast a couple of years ago, is set in an Irish village where a big-budget Hollywood movie is being made. Conleth Hill and Seán Campion play two extras in the movie and all thirteen other characters as well, including the movie's female star, its director, and various locals. Though the play has its clever ways when it comes to sending up both Hollywood and Irish mores, the stories being told here aren't anything you haven't seen before. Still, Hill and Campion, under the direction of Ian McElhinney, go at their parts with such relish that the evening has an almost vaudevillian theatricality about it. (4/16/01) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

TAMBURLAINE
The Target Margin Theatre continues its Christopher Marlowe season with the playwright's 1587 ten-acter, presented in two acts a night. (Theatorium, 198 Stanton St. For more information, call 358-3657.)

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA
Theatre for a New Audience presents Shakespeare's play, under the direction of Sir Peter Hall. (American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

UP AGAINST THE WIND
New York Theatre Workshop presents a play about the life of Tupac Shakur, written by Michael Develle Winn. (79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)



"Harrows: A Slow Introduction," choreographed by Boris Charmatz (see Dance).

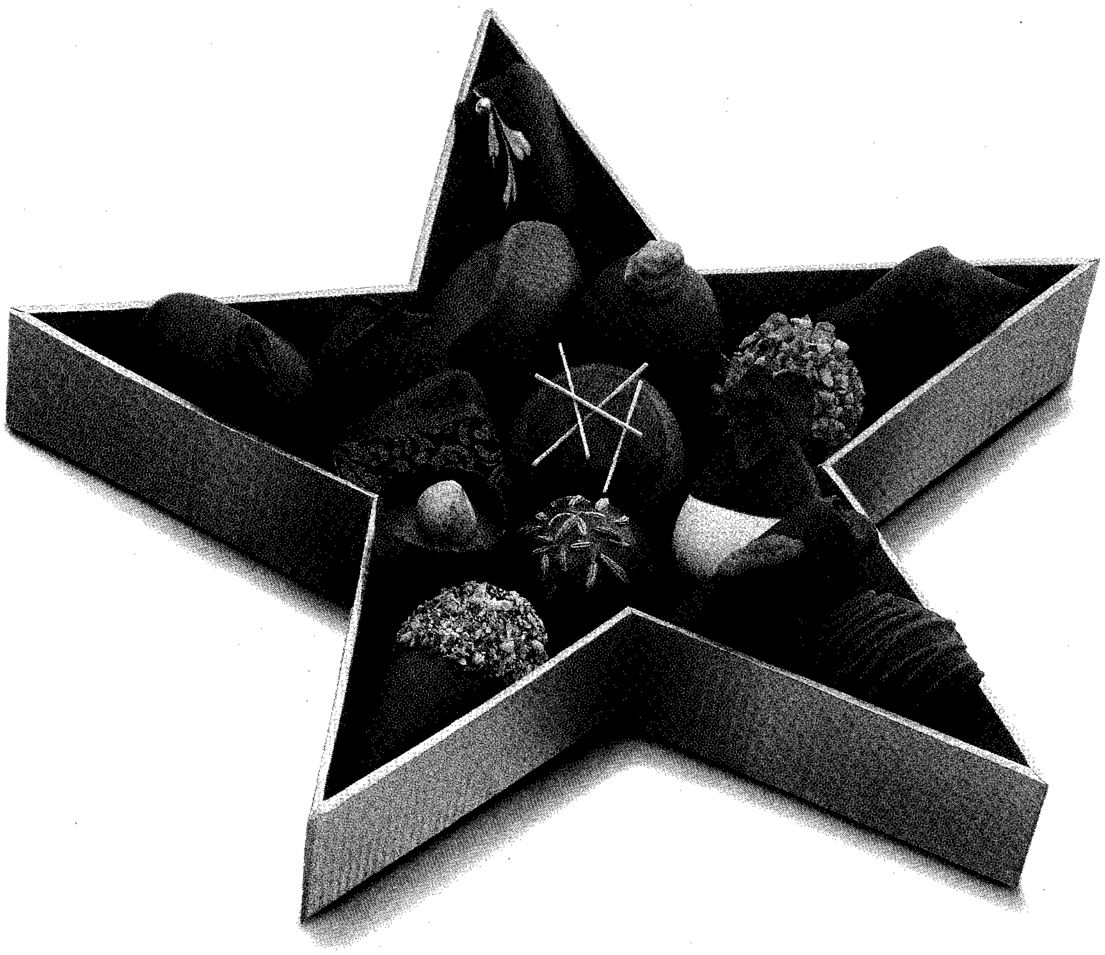
JOHN RITTER

LONG RUNS

AIDA
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4747.

ANNIE GET YOUR GUN
Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4747.



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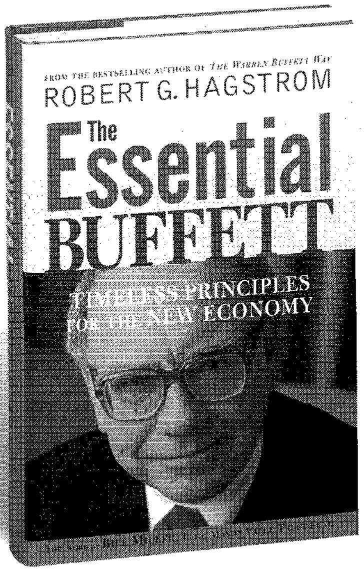
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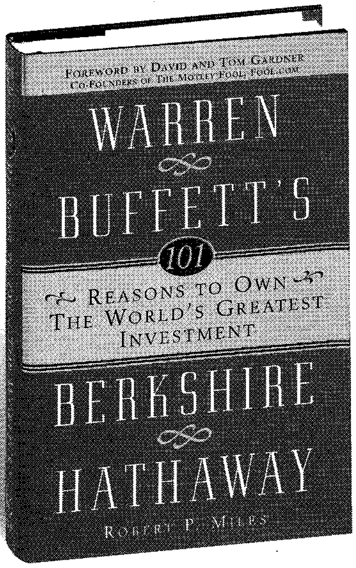
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Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

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Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.

DE LA GUARDA
Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.

THE DINNER PARTY
Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.

DINNER WITH FRIENDS
Variety Arts, 110 Third Ave., at 14th St. 239-6200.

THE FANTASTICKS
Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 2001: A SPOOF ODYSSEY
Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200.

FOSSE
Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

THE FULL MONTY
Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.

FULLY COMMITTED
Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.

KISS ME, KATE
Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.

THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.

LES MISÉRABLES
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.

THE MUSIC MAN
Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.

PERFECT CRIME
Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

PROOF
Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.

RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000.

STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.

THE SYRINGA TREE
Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 307-4100.

THE TALE OF THE ALLERGIST'S WIFE
Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.

TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING
St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200.

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
The company opens its spring season with a bouquet of Balanchine ballets. May 1 at 8: "The Four Temperaments," "Duo Concertant," "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through July 1.)

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
Like its rival across the fountain, the company kicks off the spring season. The opening gala, on April 30 at 6:30, includes the première of "Black Tuesday," by Paul Taylor, and selections from "Cinderella," "Swan Lake," and "Sleeping Beauty," among other works. ♦ May 1 at 8: The première of "Gong," by Mark Morris, "Black Tuesday," and "The Brahms-Haydn Variations." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through June 23.)

ELIOT FELD/BALLET TECH
The company, one of the co-founders of the Joyce Theatre, closes its five-week spring season. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 17-20 at 8, April 21 at 2 and 8, and April 22 at 2.)

"POUR AINSI DIRE"
The choreographer Maguy Marin and her company, who in the past brought her updated versions of "Cendrillon" ("Cinderella") and "Coppélia" to the city, perform as part of the two-week, six-venue France Moves New York festival. (The New Victory, 209 W. 42nd St. 242-0800. April 26-27 at 8, April 28 at 2 and 8, and April 29 at 5.)

TABLES FOR TWO

MANDUCATIS
13-27 Jackson Ave., at 47th Ave., Long Island City, Queens (718-729-4602)—Up the stairs from the rattletrap G line and across the street from T&A Auto Repairs stands the fake-stone façade and neon sign of this Long Island City old-timer. Antitheft gates give way to an abandoned-looking barroom, where the owner, Vincenzo Cerbone, rises from his desk to steer you to the main dining room full of brass and brick and dusty, empty bottles of Amarone; if he remembers your face he'll treat you like family.

It's a family kind of place. Vincenzo's wife of forty years, Ida, is in the kitchen every day, and his son Anthony works the floor. Anthony speaks wise and staccato and never forgets a name or a regular's favorite Chianti. "O.K., you're in," he snaps after taking an order. "I'm going down to the cellar—can I get you anything?" There's a lengthy, inscrutable wine list, but none of Anthony's on-the-mark, reasonably priced recommendations ever seem to be on it. "Go easy on that Dolcetto, boys," he warns one table. "It says it's only thirteen per cent alcohol, but that's just to get it through customs."

Portions are huge, and no one notices. (It has to be said: there are some really big people here.) The cold seafood platter is a clean and crisp spread of lightly marinated mussels, calamari, scungilli, and shrimp. Baked clams are a rare achievement: they actually taste like clams. And the mozzarella is so fresh it's barely set. There's a punchy penne puttanesca and really good ricotta gnocchi, but the glowing-orange fettuccine Bolognese seems to be the most popular dish in the joint. The pork and veal can be tough and bland, but a frequent special involves giant, succulent blocks of roast pig with skin. Anthony will decide if you need a side. "How about I bring an order of cauliflower for the table," he says, with no interrogative inflection. For dessert, the comically huge wedge of ricotta cheesecake is as luxuriously creamy and liquor-soaked as any of the other five or six desserts, which include tiramisu and cannoli.

Most customers leave Vincenzo with a very precise "See you next week," but on a recent night an imposing, bullet-headed gentleman started an argument about his bill: nobody would let him have it. Apparently he's such a regular his money is no good here. (Open weekdays for lunch and dinner, weekends for dinner only. Entrées $8-$24.)

—*Owen Phillips*

"HARROWS: A SLOW INTRODUCTION"
"You may think that because we perform naked you will see everything," the twenty-seven-year-old choreographer Boris Charmatz says. "But with dance, nakedness hides more than it shows." Charmatz is full of such contrary and intriguing notions. In his United States début, the Parisian uses contact improvisation (a method of throwing and catching another dancer's weight which developed in the sixties and early seventies and quickly became associated with utopian togetherness), but only to maneuver his five dancers into a perfectly uncomfortable knot. Such an approach forces a fresh take on the aging ideals of contact improv, which include, according to Charmatz, "wedding ourselves to the music, mixing bodies in nature, losing ourselves in waves of movement, creating a community, etc." Otherwise, he says, the dance technique just becomes "a trick that we get better and better at." (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. April 24 at 9 and April 25-28 at 8.)

"LES VEILLEURS"
Often the concept of "dance theatre" makes you want to skip both the drama and the dance—the pontification of the one and the prop-driven movement of the other. But the work of the Hungarian-

born choreographer and director Josef Nadj may restore your flagging faith. In this evening-length piece inspired by a love of Kafka—the title alludes to the recurring watchmen in his stories—the magical props are not burdened with obscure symbolic import; they're evocative, but they also fit nicely with the magnetic and weighted movements of the French dancers and the Hungarian actors. And there's no pontificating. In fact, there's no talking at all, just Mauricio Kagel's cabaret music and a grainy, gray dream of a dance. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 24 at 7, April 25-28 at 8, and April 29 at 2 and 7:30.)

"SHAZAM"
The Parisian Phillippe Decouflé choreographed a splashy opening for the 1992 Winter Olympics, in Albertville, using synchronized bungee jumpers. He brings the same sensibility to Brooklyn in this full-length work featuring a counterpoint of circus and dance against illusions conjured with mirrors, cartoons, and other video wizardry. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100. April 25 and April 27-28 at 7:30 and April 29 at 3.)

"THE THIEF"
An evening of dance that pits four dancers (Emily Coates, Allyson Green, Charlotte Griffin, and Dan Illian) against one (the choreographer, Karen Graham). The lone figure is a bookish thief who delights in mind and movement games as much as she does in theft. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. April 19-21 at 8:30.)

"THE TEN-YEAR CHAT"
David Roussève returns to the site of his first solo evening-length works, with a collage of new and recent work which focusses on autobiographical monologues. The title of the evening describes its frequency, not its length. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. April 19-22 at 8:30.)

ANNABELLA GONZALEZ DANCE THEATRE
The twenty-fifth-anniversary program includes such early works as "Journey" (a solo performed inside an orange beanbag) and recent works such as "Fusion" and "Kamala." (Theatre of the Riverside Church, W. 120th St. at Riverside Dr. 722-4128. April 19-20 at 8 and April 21 at 3 and 8.)

"TRIPTYCH"
The Tiffany Mills Company presents three related works: "Half-Hinged," "Root 30," and "Rolling the Hillock." (Joyce SoHo, 155 Mercer St. 334-7479. April 19-22 at 8.)

"SLIVERS OF SKY"
The choreographer Nadine Helstroffer offers an hour-long work for six dancers, accompanied by a mélange of Hindu and Sufi music arranged by Nana Simopoulos. (Merce Cunningham Dance Studio, 55 Bethune St. 925-6231. April 28-29 at 8:30.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

BERES HAMMOND
The great and soulful reggae vocalist. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. April 19 at 8.)

JAZZ AT THE PENTHOUSE
The bassist **Rodney Whitaker,** the bedrock of the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, and the pianist **Mulgrew Miller,** perhaps the most ubiquitous figure of the New York club scene of the past two decades, duet. Their mutual love of the blues will see them through. (Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, Lincoln Center. 721-6500. April 19-20 at 8.)

RICHARD THOMPSON
Many things have made this English troubadour an acquired taste, from his weedy croon to his knotty guitar work to the dizzying anecdotes he indiscriminately spills during performance. But what keeps most people away from Thompson is his gift for pouring salt on open wounds. A solo acoustic show. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. April 20 at 7:30.)

JOE JACKSON
Returning to pop, the format with which he won his greatest success (after years of dabbling in classical music and jazz), Jackson picks up where his

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1982 album, "Night & Day," left off, with "Night & Day II." Gone is the lyrical glitz of tracks like "Stepping Out"—the new work focusses on the grittier side of New York City. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. April 20 at 8.)

MARTIN SEXTON

This remarkable singer-songwriter exhibits a fresh and spontaneous folk-rock sensibility, and his well-respected live performances are characterized by his use of his entire body as a conductor for his powerful vocals. (Town Hall. April 21 at 7:30.)

WORLD MUSIC INSTITUTE

April 21 at 8: The monks of the Drepung Loseling monastery take the stage in brightly colored brocaded silk outfits and offer temple music (cymbals, bells, chanting, and the like) and dance in the spirit of world healing. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) ♦ April 27-29: A festival of Greek music and dance. The first night features songs and dance from Macedonia and Thrace. The second night concentrates on the sounds and steps of Pontos, Constantinople, and Asia Minor. The final night is an evening of *rebetika*, the gritty "Greek blues" that grew out of such environs as hashish speakeasies and prisons. (Town Hall. For more information, call 545-7536. All shows at 8.)

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SUPER LOVERS

Champale stops by the Luna Lounge to celebrate the release of its début album, "Simple Days."

BARBEL SCHMIDT

WILLIE NELSON

The grizzled highwayman returns. (Beacon Theatre. April 21 at 8.)

SHERYL CORMIER

An evening of top-shelf Cajun music. (La Belle Époque, 827 Broadway, at 13th St. For more information, call 685-7597. April 22 at 7.)

"NY LOVE-IN FOR BILLY HIGGINS"

The incomparable drummer, who enriched the groove of everyone from Ornette Coleman to Thelonious Monk to David Murray, needs another liver transplant, and the jazz community is rallying behind him in a benefit featuring, among others, the Billy Higgins All-Stars (Don Sickler, Ron Carter, James Spaulding, Don Braden, Ronnie Mathews, and Kenny Washington), the Eric Reed quintet, and the Cedar Walton ensemble. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-2200. April 22 at 7:30.)

MARK KNOPFLER

The former Dire Straits leader has embarked on a solo career that exchanges the commercial success of his old band for more personally meaningful narratives. His second solo album, "Sailing to Philadelphia," for example, explores the divide between the rich and the poor, among other things. (Beacon Theatre. April 29-30 at 8.)

PHIL LESH & FRIENDS

Furthur and furthur with the affable former bassist for the Grateful Dead. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. April 30 at 7:30.)

OUTKAST

The Atlanta duo of André 3000 and Big Boi, along with their production team, Organized Noize, cranks out fast-moving lyrics and beats in the spirit of George Clinton's Parliament-Funkadelic empire. But wait, there's more. Toss in the political consciousness of mid-period Sly and the Family Stone and you'll start to get the picture. (Hammerstein Ballroom. April 30 at 8.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

BOTTOM LINE

15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—April 20: The acoustic survivor **Dan Hicks**, whose cynicism after all this time still doesn't outweigh his lyricism, stops by with his Hot Licks. April 24: Leaving the arenas behind, **Billy Idol** brings his peroxided, prefab punk-pop back to New York. Seeing Old (Rebel) Yeller sneering, pumping his fingerless-gloved fist, and dancing with himself in this tiny venue might inspire glib remarks about how the mighty have fallen. But Idol can console himself with the knowledge that the Bottom Line stage has also played host to the likes of Bob Dylan and Lou Reed.

BOWERY BALLROOM

6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—April 23-24: Having fully evolved from the L.A. underground scene with last year's LP "Quality Control," the four m.c.s and two d.j.s of **Jurassic 5** lay old-school-inspired rhymes over well-crafted jazz-funk beats. While the staccato bass rap of Chali 2Na and the d.j. work of Cut Chemist are live-show standouts, it's their vocal harmonies and intelligent lyrics that really separate them from much of today's uninspired hip-hop.

IRVING PLAZA

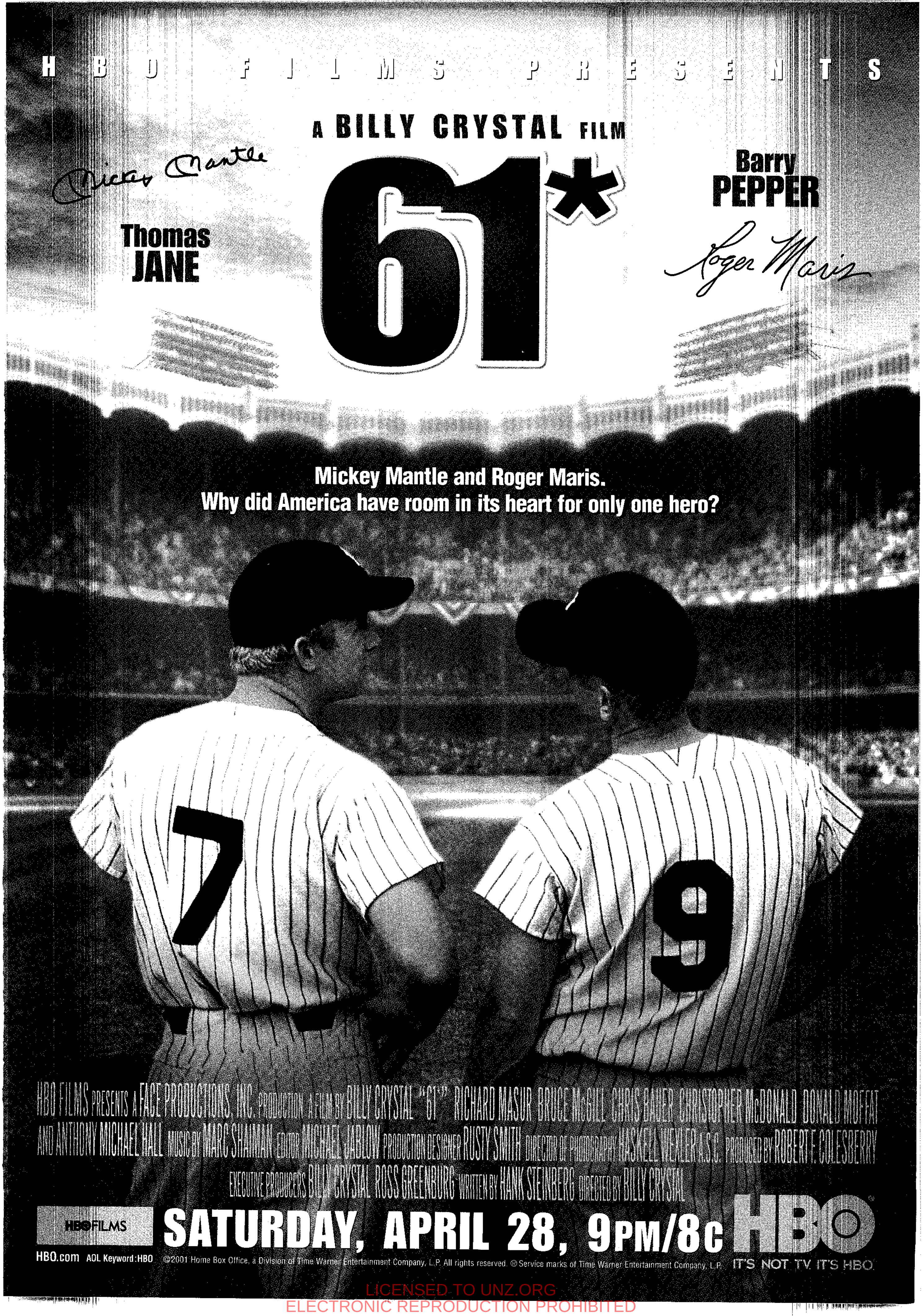
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—April 18: He hasn't had a hit since "Cars," the hugely catchy 1979 paean to all things automotive, but **Gary Numan** never really went away. His eerily loyal fans (known as Numanoids) have zealously supported his every dubious career move. And now that the Nine Inch Nails generation has touted him as an electro-pioneer, Numan is back to get proper credit. April 28: Seattle's fearsome **Melvins**, arguably the original grunge band, were a huge influence on the comparatively poppy Nirvana. The band specializes in pavement-cracking slabs of guitar sludge and unfathomable demonic vocals. Filling out this loud bill are the smart-alecky collegiate noisemakers **Folk Implosion** and a new incarnation of New York City's own endearing mechanized-racket provider, **Skeleton Key**. May 1: **Badly Drawn Boy.** Despite (or perhaps because of) a critically acclaimed début album of experimental indie rock and the extra kudos of having his music used for a Gap ad, Damon Gough (the Boy in question) has a reputation for unpredictable, shoddy, and often irritated live performances, which are occasionally topped by bouts of profanity. Clearly ill at ease with his newfound celebrity and dogged by frequent comparisons to Beck, Gough may end up as the Brian Wilson of the new millennium, so catch him onstage before he sequesters himself in the studio for good. ♦ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the Society, call 696-9737.

LUNA LOUNGE

171 Ludlow St. (260-2323)—April 20: **Champale,** the unusually flexible and inventive septet led by the singer and guitarist Mark Rozzo, celebrates the release of its début album, "Simple Days." With such assorted friends as **Clem Snide** and **Nada Surf.**

MAXWELL'S

1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-0406)—April 21: The roots-rock supergroup **Swag,** featuring the keyboardist Jerry Dale McFadden, of Sixpence None the Richer; the guitarist Robert



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Reynolds, of the Mavericks; the drummer Ken Coomer, of Wilco; and the bassist Tom Petersson, of Cheap Trick. April 30 and May 1: Proud to dwell perpetually in commercial obscurity, North Carolina's stridently independent **Superchunk** could once have eclipsed the comparatively corporate Green Day with its barbed yet poppy rock. But the band refused to play the major-label game, and, as a consequence, its audience consists mostly of critics and hipsters who wear the term "slacker" like a badge. With **Annie Hayden,** the former guitarist and singer for the indie-rock band Spent.

MERCURY LOUNGE

217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—April 19-20: Regardless of their punk origins, the **Mekons** aren't so much safety-pinned also-rans as perennial underdogs, acclaimed by rock critics all over the world yet virtually ignored by everyone else. Never afraid to be un-hip, the stridently socialist, independent, experimental, and unflappable Mekons bring their raggedly eclectic hybrid of rock, country, blues, folk, and whathaveyou to town. With the singer-songwriter (and host of WFMU's Saturday afternoon show, "Radio Thrift Shop") **Laura Cantrell** on the 19th and **Swag** (see Maxwell's) on the 20th.

S.O.B.'S

204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—April 18-19: The Brazilian chanteuse **Astrud Gilberto,** best known for her delicate, impromptu recording of "The Girl from Ipanema." April 24-25: A night of reggae with **Toots and the Maytals,** who gave us the hits "Funky Kingston" and "Pressure Drop." April 26-27: More than thirty years after "Grazing in the Grass" topped the R. & B. charts, the South African soul-jazz master **Hugh Masekela** is still tearing up the stage, jumping back and forth between the trumpet and the cowbell and rattling off sermonlike stories between songs. Dining.

VILLAGE UNDERGROUND

130 W. 3rd St. (777-7745)—April 21: **Al Kooper,** whose credits as a songwriter ("This Diamond Ring"), session player (organ on Bob Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone"), bandleader (the Blues Project; Blood, Sweat and Tears), and producer (Lynyrd Skynyrd) read like a walking tour through the sixties and seventies, gives a rare solo show.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL

59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Through April 21: **Julie Wilson,** the doyenne of New York's chanteuses, winds up a four-week run dedicated to the songs of Dorothy Fields and Amanda McBroom. Dining.

BIRDLAND

315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—April 18-21: **Jimmy Scott,** the jazz-pop singer with the ethereally androgynous voice. April 25-28: **James Moody.** The twisted sax virtuoso spikes his bop excursions with right-side-of-the-brain humor. Dining.

BLUE NOTE

131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—**Nancy Wilson** burst onto the scene back in 1959 with a thrilling voice, a tremendous presence, a brilliant feel for the music, and a smoldering beauty that was impossible to resist. She just as quickly went the glossy supper-club route, playing the big casinos, making television appearances, and recording lush, uninspired albums. But live she's still got it. She appears here with her trio through April 22.

CARLYLE HOTEL

Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, through June 23, the magisterially puckish **Bobby Short.** ♦ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **Barbara Carroll** presides at the piano through June 23.

FEINSTEIN'S AT THE REGENCY

540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4095)—Through May 5: The **John Pizzarelli** trio, with special guests **Bucky Pizzarelli** and the vocalist **Jessica Molaskey.** John is an exceedingly talented singer, guitarist, and bandleader; his father, Bucky, is the acknowledged master of the seven-string guitar, an instrument he has played alongside such artists as Benny Goodman and Stéphane Grappelli. As a guest with John's trio (which also includes another son, **Martin,** on bass), Pizzarelli *père* will display his matchless artistry. Father, sons, trio pianist **Ray Kennedy,** and Molaskey (who is also John's wife) all love the great Tin Pan Alley repertoire, and even without a drummer in sight this clan will have no problem heating up the club.

JAZZ STANDARD

116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—Through April 22: The prodigious pianist **Monty Alexander** and his trio. Mondays in April belong to the **Howard Fishman** quartet. Dining.

TONIC

107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—April 18-20: **Derek Bailey,** the poet of guitar noise, brings in his band Company, which features **John Zorn** on saxophone.

VILLAGE VANGUARD

178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through April 22: **Jim Hall,** the poet laureate of jazz guitarists, has longtime drummer **Terry Clarke** and the superb bassist **George Mraz** interacting with him. April 24-29: Another fine guitarist, **Louis Stewart,** an Irish player who has worked with Benny Goodman and George Shearing, makes his Vanguard début, backed by an all-American rhythm section, the non-sibling **Washingtons**—bassist **Peter** and drummer **Kenny.** The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ZINC BAR

90 W. Houston St. (477-8337)—April 24-25: **John Stubblefield** and **Quiet Fire.** Whether blowing tank-force tenor sax with the Mingus Big Band or making lyrical sketches on a Kip Hanrahan recording (to mention just two of his myriad projects over the past decade), Stubblefield can be counted on to create intelligent, impassioned music.

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Janáček: Taras Bulba for Orchestra
Martinů: Rhapsody-Concerto for Viola and Orchestra
Dvořák: Symphony No.8 in G major, Op.88
Pre-concert lecture in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse 2:00–2:30 by Michael Beckerman and Caryl Emerson
Avery Fisher Hall Tickets: $50/40/28

Monday, April 30 at 8:00
Andrea Dankova soprano
Marina Domashenko mezzo-soprano
Sergej Larin tenor
Alistair Miles bass
London Symphony Chorus
Dvořák: Te Deum for Soprano, Bass, Orchestra and Chorus, Op.103
Dvořák: Symphonic Variations for Orchestra, Op. 78
Janáček: Glagolitic Mass
Pre-concert lecture in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse 7:00–7:30 by Michael Beckerman and Diane Paige
Avery Fisher Hall Tickets: $50/40/28

Wednesday, May 2 at 7:30
Sarah Chang violin
Dvořák: Scherzo Capriccioso, Op.66
Dvořák: Concerto in A minor for Violin and Orchestra, Op.53
Smetana: Selections from *Má Vlast* ("The Moldau," "Sarka," and "From Bohemian Fields and Groves")
Pre-concert lecture in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse 6:30–7:00 by Michael Beckerman and Maiko Kawabata
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ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—The British Romantic William Blake (1757-1827) is best known as a poet, but his gifts as a visual artist were prodigious as well. Apprenticed to an engraver by the age of fifteen, he went on to develop an innovative printing technique (which he claimed came to him in a vision) that enabled him to self-publish such illuminated texts as "Songs of Innocence and Experience." The copper-etching plates and pages from the book cover one long wall of an extensive show that includes more than a hundred and seventy-five works. Through June 24. ♦ **"The Treasury of the Basel Cathedral"** features seventy-five objects, most from the eleventh through the sixteenth centuries—the emphasis is on jewel-encrusted gold and silver, but there are also assorted textiles, prayer books, and a handsome pair of embellished doors with ironwork as fine as filigree. Through May 27. ♦ With fifteen paintings by Vermeer (and possibly a sixteenth, "Young Woman Seated at a Virginal," which has his luminously impersonal touch), five by the tragically short-lived Fabritius, who may have been his teacher, and ten by his great rival De Hooch, **"Vermeer and the Delft School"** offers an encyclopedic look at the milieu that formed the calmest genius of the seventeenth century. This is the Met at its best: a stately procession of masterpieces, accompanied by informative, sometimes tart commentary. Through May 27. ♦ **"Correggio and Parmigianino: Master Draftsmen of the Renaissance."** Through May 6. ♦ **"Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Chinese Painting."** Through Aug. 19. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—**"Van Gogh's Postman: The Portraits of Joseph Roulin"** is a refreshing antidote to blockbuster fever. This small show (five paintings and two drawings) reunites all but one of the portraits Van Gogh (1853-90) made of his friend and neighbor Joseph Roulin. Painted between the summer of 1888 (the infamous year of the ear) and the spring of 1889 (the year before the artist's death), the pictures grow increasingly stylized, culminating in the harmonious turbulence of the one portrait here which is part of MOMA's own collection. Van Gogh wrote that the postman "has a head like Socrates, interesting to paint," and after an initial three-quarter-length portrait of Roulin, a somewhat awkward sitter, he focussed on a head-and-shoulders format. The background evolves from robin's-egg blue to mustard yellow to a floral wallpaper as the postman's beard shifts from naturalistic blonds and browns to a roil of aquatic blues and greens worthy of a Hokusai wave. Through May 15. ♦ A retrospective exhibition of the radiant, mural-size color photographs of Andreas Gursky. Through May 15. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—**"The Global Guggenheim"** offers a selection of two hundred paintings and sculptures from the far-flung collection, normally housed in museum branches and partner institutions in Berlin, Bilbao, Venice, and St. Petersburg. Through April 22. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—**"BitStreams,"** the museum's survey of digitally enhanced art work, is an exercise in, and maybe a cure for, techno-optimism. The objects themselves—photographs, videos, digitally designed sculptures, and a generous sampling of sound works—are gimmicky and modest, especially compared to the infatuated descriptions in the wall texts that accompany them. There are exceptions: Paul Pfeiffer's celebrated Ptolemaic basketball video (a spinning ball at the center of a chaotic universe of players, hands, and hoops) looks as bewitching as ever. The show's most tantalizing and ambitious piece is John Klima's "ecosystm 2000," which purports to trans-

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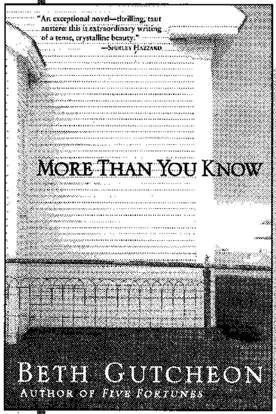
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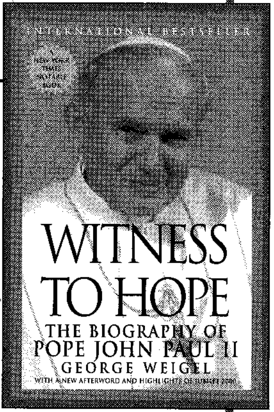
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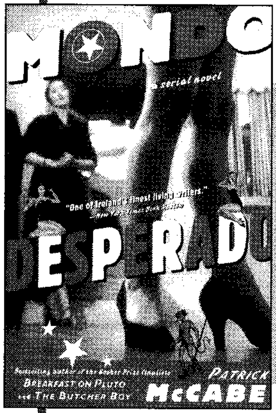

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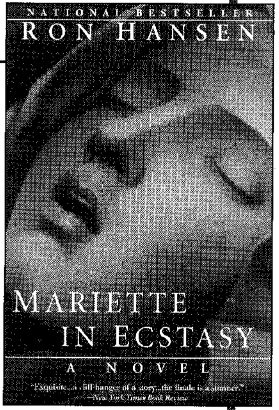
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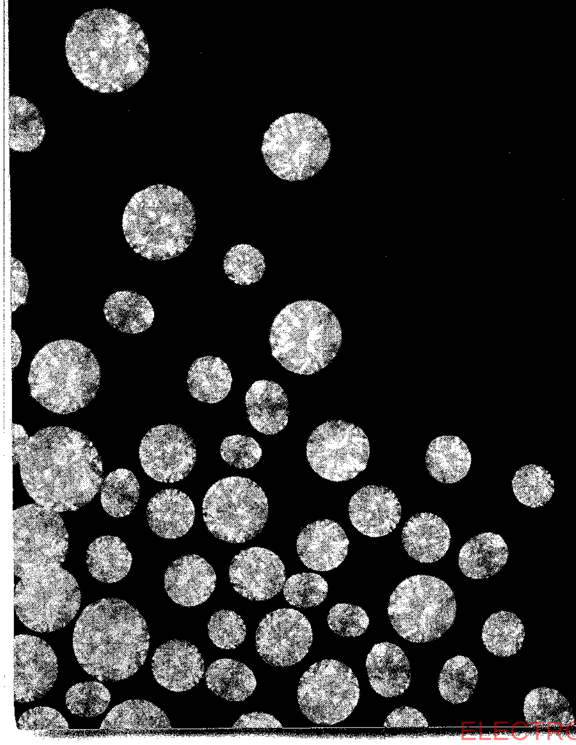

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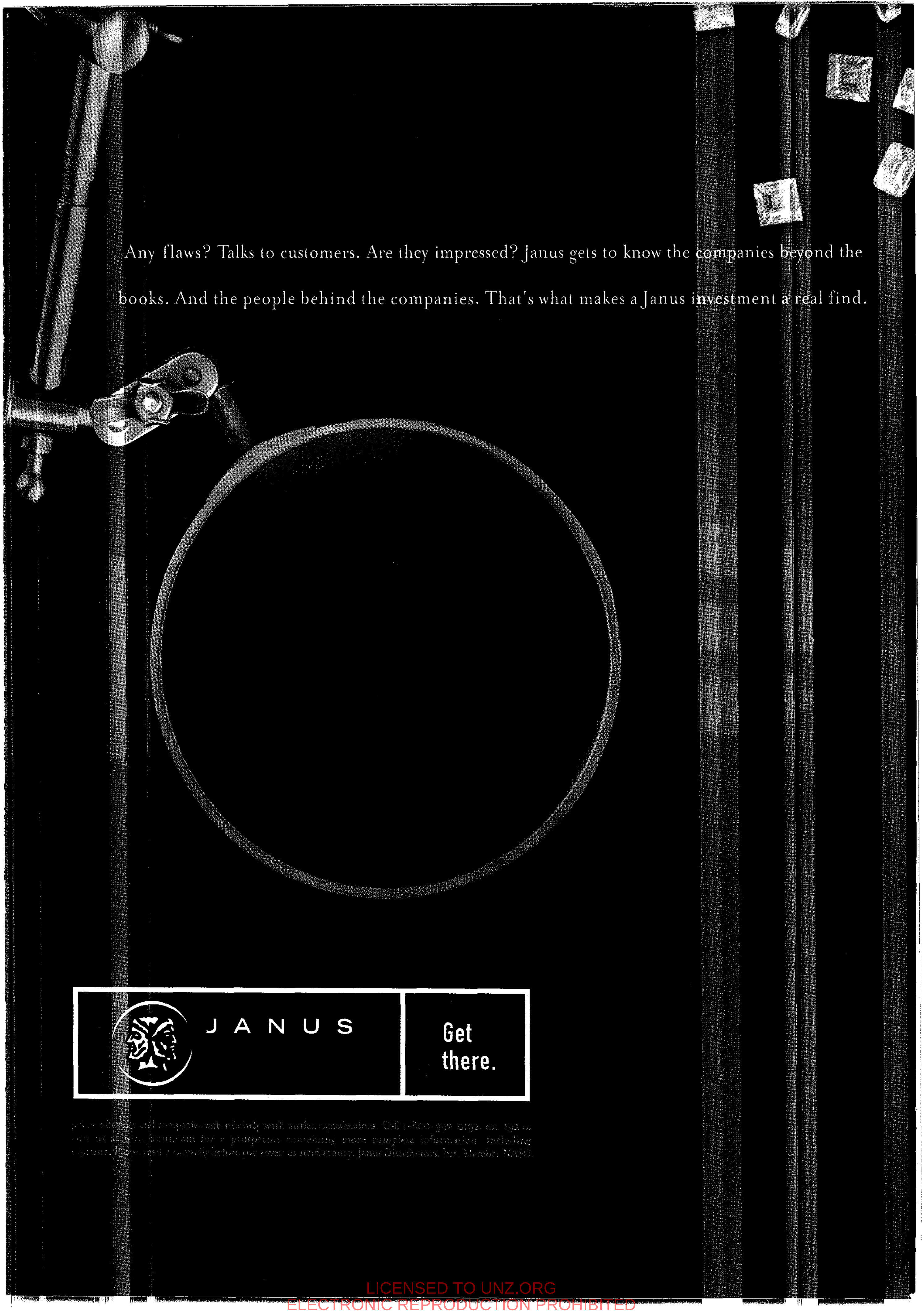

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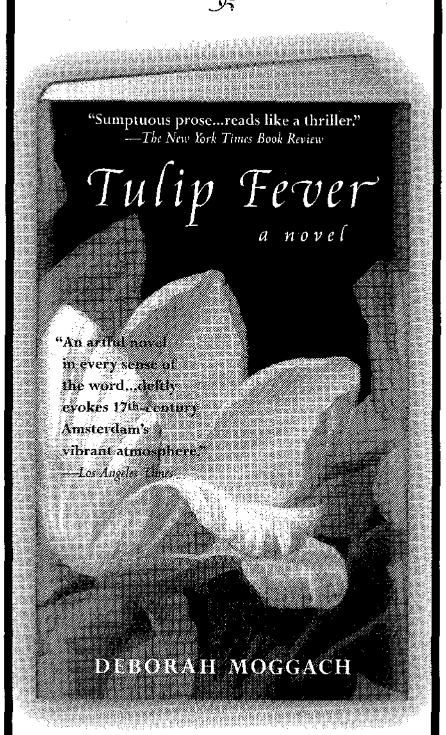
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late up-to-the-minute economic and weather conditions into animated landscapes. The idea sounds fascinating; the reality (clumsy icons whooshing across a variably colored screen) is a test of patience, an exemplar of this early stage of digital creativity. Through June 10. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, Fridays, 1 to 9.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART
Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—It's hard to imagine a more eclectic exhibition than **"A Family Album: Brooklyn Collects,"** which culls art works from more than eighty lenders with ties to the borough. The premise may be a fund-raising ploy, but the result is anarchy of the finest calibre. Wandering from a Pontormo Madonna to a Balthus nymphet and from Chinese antiquities to central-Asian textiles, one feels happily bewildered by the diversity of aesthetic stimuli. At the same time, the show offers the gossipy pleasures of seeing who owns what. The porn magnate Robert Guccione, Sr., has particularly fine canvases by Degas and Modigliani. The novelist Paul Auster owns a tiny Blakelock. From the abstract painter Terry Winters's collection there's a lovely Chris Ofili sketch featuring Afros. Almost nothing is worth ignoring, except the show's musical soundtrack: Lena Horne all day every day. Through July 1. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—**"Heading West"** follows the mapping of the American West from the fifteen-hundreds, when European cartographers began to take on the continent, through the nineteenth century, when the government and the robber barons raced to lay down roads and railroads. The show is as sparsely peopled as the Great Plains once were, with only the occasional photograph of an explorer, and the yellowed papers are homely at first glance, but a closer inspection pulls you in. The earliest approximations are fantastically wrong, with continents missing and askew, and the next generation is merely fantastic—one map outlines the vast original territory of California, another shows the bygone reach of the Nebraska territory. The strangest are reasonably accurate; a map of what is now Alaska and the Bering Strait manages to look as unfamiliar as anything else here. Through May 19. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 7:30.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

GRAHAM NICKSON
With the purposeful formality of Robert Wilson and the indulgent color of Emil Nolde, Nickson's paintings have a kind of lush awkwardness that's hard to get used to. His subjects (sunbathers and swimmers on vast, sky-dominated beaches) couldn't be more ingratiating. But Nickson's bathers aren't just basking; they seem to be performing a kind of operatic calisthenics. And the weather is not so much sunny as radioactive: clouds of deep ultramarine and violet scatter through tangerine skies; even the sand is keyed up to bikini brightness. The result, for all its vehement artificiality, is strangely melancholy, like a last burst of sun on Labor Day. Through April 28. (Salander O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 879-6606.)

ROXY PAINE
The Brooklyn artist divides his time between two entirely different pursuits: trompe-l'oeil mushrooms and art-making machines. Here the machines take center stage. "PMU (Painting Manufacture Unit)" and "Drawing Machine" are de-luxe models, complete with flashing warning lights and glowing laptops. At prescribed intervals, nozzles whir into action and spurt a carefully programmed arc of paint or ink. The resulting objects are a little disappointing (think candle-making). It's the theatrical spectacle of the machinery and, lurking behind it, Paine's wry take on technology and creativity which linger in one's mind. Through May 5. (James Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. 755-7171.)

Short List

JEAN DUBUFFET
Werner, 4 E. 77th St. 988-1623.
Through April 28.

SUZAN FRECON
Markey, 42 E. 76th St. 517-9892.
Through April 28.

ROBERT MANGOLD
Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292.
Through April 21.

"SELF-MADE MEN"
DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.
247-2111. Through May 5.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

ROBERT BARRY
Think of this pioneer of conceptual art as the Invisible Man, fascinated by transparency as a metaphor for the immaterial nature of ideas themselves. In this mini-retrospective, focussing on his output from 1966 to 1973, some of the pieces are represented though documentation alone, like the poetic "Inert Gas Series: Helium," in which the artist released a litre of clear gas into the atmosphere by a pool in Los Angeles. Others are physically present but no more visible, such as "Ultrasonic Wave Piece," which fills the gallery with sound waves that can be measured but not heard (or seen, for that matter). Through May 2. (Gasser & Grunert, 524 W. 19th St. 807-9494.)

STEVE DI BENEDETTO
For the last few years, DiBenedetto's paintings have been infected by a swarming, kaleidoscopic pictorrhea: images and patterns seemed to germinate, collide, and cannibalize each other almost at random, and it was hard to tell if the artist was on to something or just losing his grip. Here, his paintings are suddenly bolder—both more omnivorous and clearer than before. It takes a while to adjust to DiBenedetto's run-on syntax, and what you do see almost defies description (Richard Dadd meets Hundertwasser? Translucent helicopters meet braided rainbows?), but the results are utterly distinctive and absorbing. Through May 2. (Baumgartner, 418 W. 15th St. 633-2276.)

NANCY RUBINS
It's no surprise that these elegant drawings masquerade as sculpture. The artist is best known for monumental accumulations of such found objects as water heaters, plane parts, mattresses, and cake. Here, Rubins worries sheets of paper with so much graphite that they take on the gleam of metal. The resulting assemblages of torn and rumpled fragments, tacked together with pushpins, look more like salvaged scraps of fuselage than works on paper. Most of the drawings are installed high on the wall, as if in flight, defying their apparent gravity. Through April 21. (Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave., at 27th St. 563-4474.)

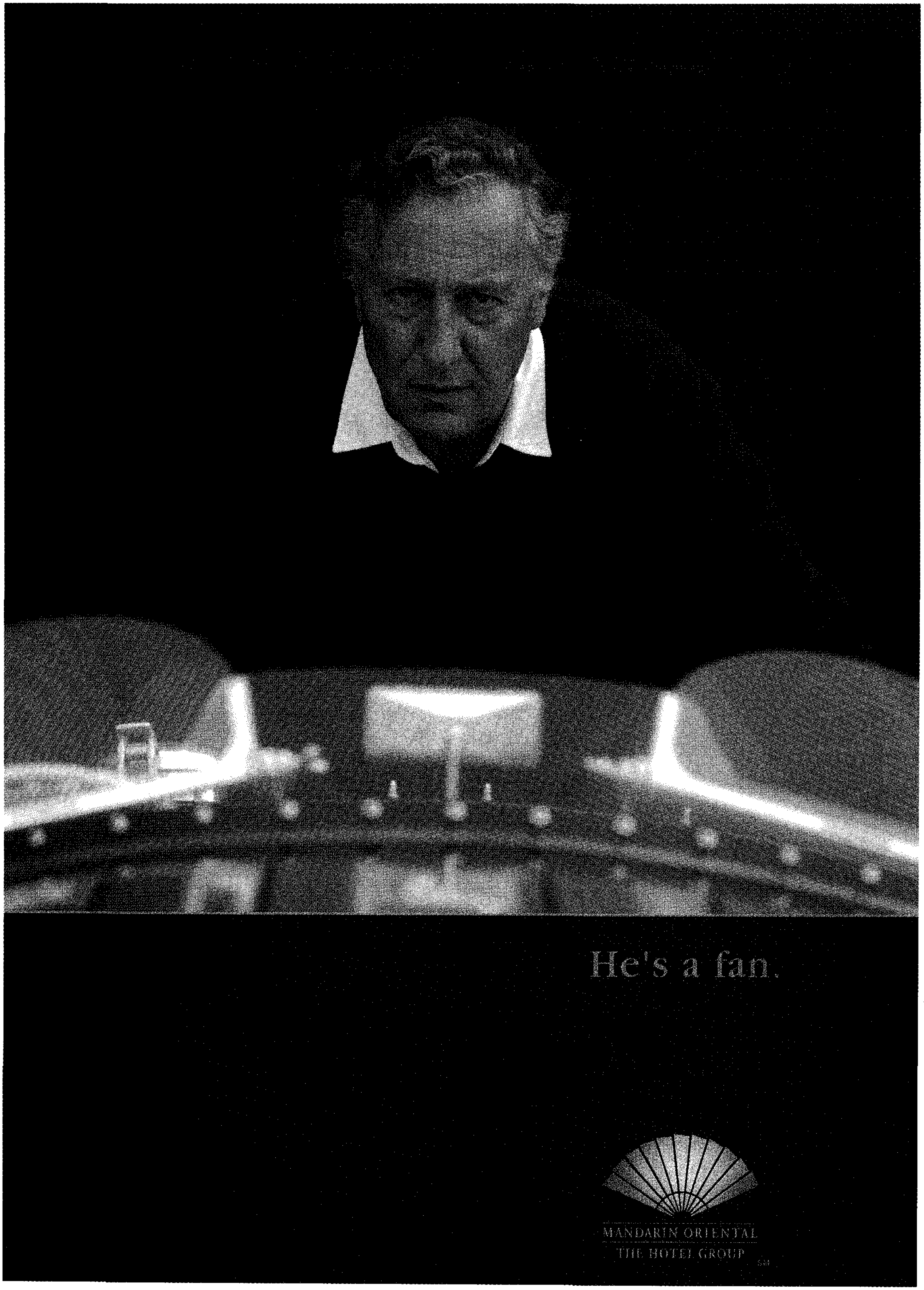
BETTY WOODMAN
This show of ceramic ensembles suggests the art of an alternate civilization whose citizens rank decorativeness next to godliness. Woodman combines tall, round vessels with jagged slabs that bear splashily glaze-painted images of other, fantasized vessels. Her style—call it Mediterranean Cubism—rhymes nostalgia for modern art with the primitive joy of pot-making. The effect is part Matisse, part Picasso, wholly fresh. Someone should design a house around "Aeolian Pyramid," a ten-foot-high, shrine-style array of thirty-six of her austerely colored, sculpturally vibrant vaselike things. Through April 28. (Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 633-6999.)

Short List

PHILIP PEARLSTEIN
Miller, 524 W. 26th St. 366-4774.
Through April 21.

JIM SHAW
Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100.
Through April 21.

TERRY WINTERS
Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200. Through April 28. See also Downtown—Short List.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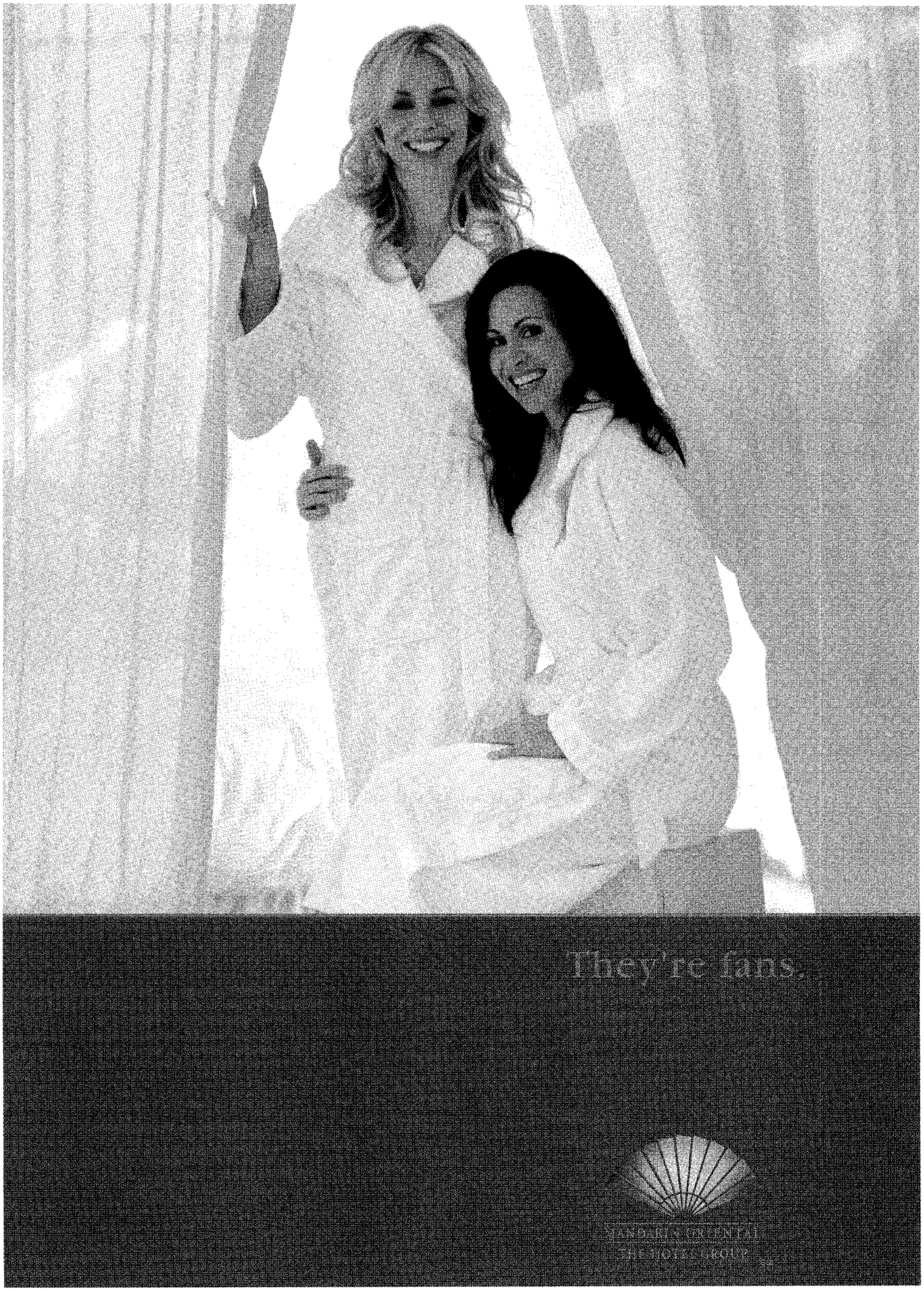
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GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

HALUK AKAKÇE
Moving through this ambitious, if abstruse, installation is like walking along a Möbius strip. A mural on the gallery walls transforms a series of thresholds into a three-dimensional painting (it suggests, among many things, a curtain draped along the space). Behind a wall covered with William Morris wallpaper lies the show's apparent destination, a room-size video projection—but this, too, contains a series of transitions, combining sequences of digital animation and live action. When asked where she comes from, one of the characters replies, "I'm in transit." Through April 28. (Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 343-7300.)

BRETT COOK-DIZNEY
This solo début is a rambling, walk-in autobiography, focussing on Cook-Dizney's cheerful ambivalence about race. Six giant reliquaries spill out over the floor and walls, offering a stoop-sale profusion of family photos, LPs, school reports, typed texts, and ephemera, including a bottle of Curl Activator Cream (a.k.a. "Jheri Juice"). At the center of each is a Photo-Realist portrait of the artist, executed in spray paint. Cook-Dizney is a deft can controller, but the ensembles depend a little too heavily on the artist's own (genuine) likability. Through May 12. (P.P.O.W, 476 Broome St. 941-8642.)

Short List

PAUL LAFFOLEY
Kent, 67 Prince St. 966-4500. Through April 21.

TERRY WINTERS
Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. 965-0753. Through April 28. See also Chelsea—Short List.

CLASSICAL NOTES

THE POWER OF FOUR
Most classical listeners buy recordings of Haydn's well-known late string quartets and leave it at that—all the great ensembles have recorded them, and the entire lot (sixty-eight of them) can seem like too much of a good thing. But the Angeles Quartet, in its new boxed set, **"Haydn: The Complete String Quartets,"** on Philips, has made the whole journey unusually enticing, and clearly outranks the earlier efforts of the Aeolian and Kodály Quartets (on London and Naxos, respectively). And at a hundred and seventy dollars for twenty-one disks, it's almost a bargain.

Haydn virtually invented the string quartet, and over the course of his career developed it into a genre that embodied an Enlightenment ideal of civility: four voices mixing harmoniously in stimulating conversation. While no one would deny that his skills deepened as the cycle progressed—the promising young composer of the charming, pastoral Opus 1 quartets is not the Olympian who brought the Opus 77 pieces to complex grandeur—it is fascinating to hear him going through the process. The gallant little pieces of Opus 9 (quasi-violin concertos brought to life by the steely virtuosity of Kathleen Lenski, the group's first violinist) move on to the moody and mercurial quartets of Opus 17, while the more settled mastery of the Opus 20 quartets and the passionate concision of the Opus 50 set give way to the deft wit of Opuses 33 and 64. The quartets of his last years transcend surface characterization. These are pieces so concentrated in their logic that they seem to grow with the regenerative energy of dividing cells.

The Angeles has long been the leading quartet on the West Coast, and it plays with the distinctively American virtues of warm emotion; rich, powerful tone; and faultless technical command. What is sometimes missing is the variety of color and attack needed to bring some of the more recondite pieces to life. These are qualities that the Festetics Quartet, a Hungarian period-instrument group, has in abundance, even if they lack the crackling virtuosity of their American colleagues. They are midway through a complete Haydn cycle for the Arcana label; a sampling of their recording of the Opus 74 quartets reveals a feast of delicate detail.

—*Russell Platt*

AUCTIONS & ANTIQUES

SOTHEBY'S
April 19 at 2: Silver (including Judaica), objects of virtu, and Russian works of art. A highlight is a pair of George II silver wine coolers made by Paul Crespin. ♦ April 19 at 10:15 A.M. and 2 and April 20 at 10:15 A.M.: "Celebration of the English Country House," a sale of paintings, sculpture, ceramics, Chinese export porcelain, furniture, and decorations. ♦ April 23 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: Jewels, featuring work by Cartier, Bulgari, Tiffany, and Bapst (a brooch of emeralds, diamonds, and natural pearls made for the Empress Eugénie in 1864). ♦ April 25 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: Photographs from the Museum of Modern Art's collection, among them work by Stieglitz, Sheeler, Man Ray, Modotti, and Steichen (including "Self Portrait, Milwaukee," from 1898). ♦ April 26 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: More photographs, including works by Atget, Sudek, Dahl-Wolfe, Irving Penn, and Michael Kenna. ♦ April 26 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: An auction of European clocks, some of which date back to the Renaissance. ♦ May 1 at 10:15 A.M.: European paintings (mostly from the nineteenth century, with an emphasis on French works from the realist, naturalist, and Barbizon schools), along with a small selection of sculpture. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

CHRISTIE'S
April 18 at 10 A.M. and 2: Photographs, including work by Arbus, Evans, Kertész, Christopher Bucklow, and Sally Mann. ♦ April 19 at 10 A.M. and 2: English furniture. ♦ April 20 at 10 A.M. and 2: Russian paintings and art works (including a Fabergé imperial snuffbox with a miniature of Tsar Nicholas II) and an assortment of silver. ♦ April 23 at 2: Books from the library of Helmut Friedlaender, with an emphasis on such incunabula as a 1465 edition of Cicero's philosophical works. ♦ April 24 at 10 A.M. and 2: Nineteenth-century furniture, ceramics, sculpture, and art works. ♦ April 25 at 10 A.M. and 2: Prints by Whistler, Picasso, Pollock, and Jasper Johns, among others. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 636-2000.)

DOYLE
April 24 at 10 A.M.: Jewelry, watches, and objects of virtu. ♦ April 25 at 10 A.M.: American furniture, decorations, prints, silver, quilts, and folk-art paintings from the eighteenth century through the twentieth. ♦ May 1 at 10 A.M.: Prints by Chagall, Prendergast, Hepworth, de Kooning, and others. ♦ May 1 at 1: Rare books, autographs, letters, and maps. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730.)

SWANN
April 19 at 10:30 A.M.: Rare books. The rich selection includes a seven-volume edition of Audubon's "Birds of America" from 1840-44, a number of books on whaling, two volumes of French erotic engravings, circa 1800, and a first edition of Charles Babbage's 1822 proposal for the first "difference engine," or calculating machine. ♦ April 26 at 10:30 A.M.: Books from the early years of printing, featuring Spanish volumes, religious works in Latin, and a selection of eighteenth-century English literature. ♦ May 1 at 10:30 A.M. and 2:30: Prints by Rembrandt, Redon, Cassatt, Warhol, and others. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

BILL BRANDT
A retrospective of work by the English artist (1904-83) which includes some eighty examples of his early reportage and street photography and his sig-

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nature Surrealist nudes. The earliest images are theatrical studies: an off-balance Hungarian waving an empty bottle; a Spaniard kneeling like a saint; the artist's brother in top hat and tails, leaning against a lamppost. The nudes, made using a large-format camera with a wide-angle lens, render the female body as a fleshy landscape, at once intimate and overwhelming. Through May 5. (Houk, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070.)

MITCH EPSTEIN
This small survey of Epstein's work includes pastoral studies of American recreation from the nineteen-seventies to the present, along with more recent images from his forthcoming book on New York. Epstein finds narrative in unexpected places—including a parking lot full of R.V.s and colorful American sedans—and in more familiar settings: on a river's edge, two scruffy adolescent boys recline gracefully, smoking cigarettes down to the filter. Through April 28. (Sikkema, 504 W. 22nd St. 646-336-5353.)

LIZ RIDEAL
For the past fifteen years, the drugstore photo booth has been Rideal's camera and studio. These new photocollages exchange the colorful fabrics of her last project for a mixture of flowers and roots. They toy successfully with convention, but are constrained by symmetry and look a bit too much like textile design. Her most evocative pieces are enlargements of a few frames, so that, say, a cluster of foliage on a deep-blue background looks like something you'd see on a scuba dive. Through April 28. (Schoormans, 508 W. 26th St. 243-3159.)

DAVID VESTAL
Vestal's rainy-day photographs revel in the impressionistic play of light on wet streets, but their sympathies lie with the drenched pedestrians. In a 1950 photograph of Nassau Street, Vestal moved away from the crowded sidewalks and stood alone in the street to record a band of white sky reflected on the wet pavement. These images are complemented by a series taken from inside a car and benevolent views of umbrella-bearing figures passing below his Twenty-second Street window. Through April 28. (Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave., at 25th St. 989-7600.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
With "Telling Tales," Kiki Smith returns to the mythologies of earliest childhood via photography, sculpture, and video. "Gang of Girls," a series of thirteen photographed drawings of Little Red Riding Hood, is displayed in a darkened room with a roughly drawn and animated video of a big, bad "NightWolf" walking menacingly by—stepping into the installation is like entering a dark area of the psyche, full of old fears. The unconfident drawings evoke preteen marginalia, the kind of doodles done in spiral notebooks. Their fragility and naïveté are an exciting departure for Smith, who can be heavy-handed in her depictions of the female body as a sexual battleground. ♦ Hans Bellmer's ever-reassembled dolls and a collection of Victorian daguerreotype portraits of male friends—some of whom look to modern eyes like couples—are also on show. All shows at the Center's Midtown space through June 10. ♦ A survey of Mary Ellen Mark's work is on show in the Uptown galleries through June 16. (Uptown: 1130 Fifth Ave., at 93rd St. Midtown: 1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 860-1777. Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

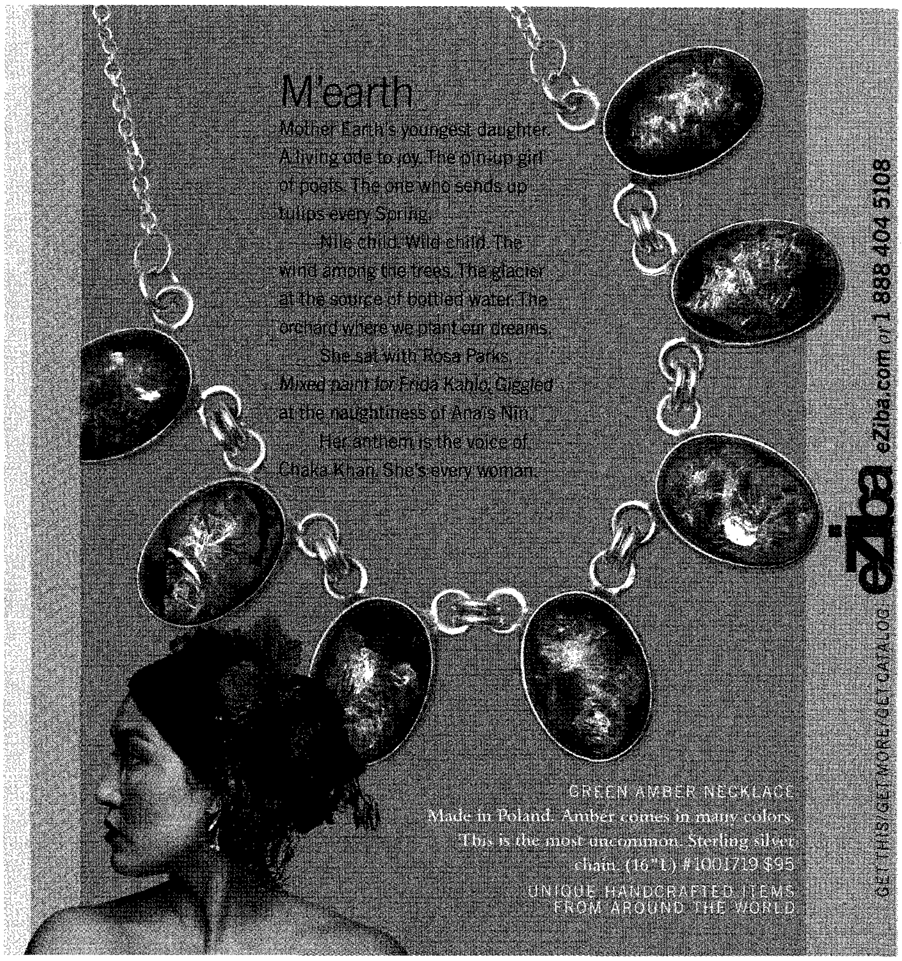
Short List

CHARLES HARBUTT / MAGGIE TAYLOR
Miller, 20 W. 57th St. 397-3930.
Both shows through May 19.

JOHN YANG
Stevenson, 338 W. 23rd St. 352-0070.
Through May 15.

"CONSTRUCTION/DESTRUCTION"
DeLellis, 47 E. 68th St. 327-1482.
Through May 12.

See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art.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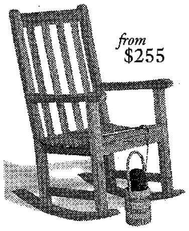

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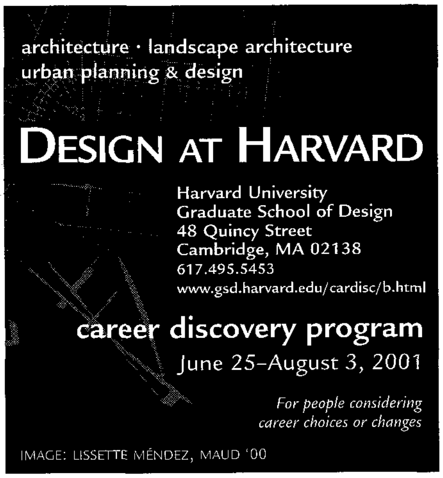
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CLASSICAL MUSIC
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METROPOLITAN OPERA
The house brings its season to a close. Saint-Saëns's **"Samson and Delilah,"** with Olga Borodina, Plácido Domingo, and Sergei Leiferkus; conducted by Mark Elder. (April 18 at 8 and April 21 at 8:30.) ♦ **"Un Ballo in Maschera,"** with Michele Crider, Youngok Shin, Barbara Dever, Franco Farina, and Juan Pons; Plácido Domingo. (April 19 at 8.) ♦ With Anna Maria Sanchez (in her début) and Korliss Uecker replacing Crider and Shin, respectively; Franz Vote. (April 25 at 7:30.) ♦ The cast of April 19 returns; Franz Vote. (April 28 at 1:30.) ♦ **"Ariadne auf Naxos,"** with Deborah Voigt, Lyubov Petrova, Susanne Mentzer, Richard Margison, Graham Clark, and Wolfgang Brendel; James Levine. (April 20 at 8.) ♦ Berg's **"Lulu,"** with Christine Schäfer, Hanna Schwarz, David Kuebler, and James Courtney; James Levine. (April 21 at 1:30 and April 24 at 8.) ♦ A revival of Janáček's **"The Makropulos Case,"** with Catherine Malfitano, Robert Brubaker, Tom Fox, and Peter Mikulás; Charles Mackerras. (April 23, April 26, and April 28 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA
Korngold's **"Die Tote Stadt,"** with Lauren Flanigan, Heather Buck, John Horton Murray, and Charles Robert Stephens; George Manahan conducts. (April 18, April 24, and April 26 at 7:30 and April 21 at 1:30.) ♦ Colin Graham's new production of Douglas Moore's tragic folk opera, **"The Ballad of Baby Doe."** With Elizabeth Futral (in the title role), Mark Delavan, and Joyce Castle; George Manahan. (April 19 and April 25 at 7:30 and April 28 at 1:30.) ♦ **"La Bohème,"** with Elizabeth Blancke-Biggs, Shelley Jameson, Gerard Powers, and Michael Corvino; Gerald Steichen. (April 20 and April 28 at 8 and April 22 at 1:30.) ♦ **"Rigoletto,"** with Jami Rogers, Elizabeth Batton, Gaétan Lapèrriere, Carlo Scibelli, and John Marcus Bindel; Steven Mosteller. (April 21 and April 27 at 8 and April 29 at 1:30.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. These are the final performances of the season.)

OPERA ORCHESTRA OF NEW YORK
Eve Queler conducts **"Les Huguenots,"** Meyerbeer's 1836 grand opera based on the events of the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre. One of the most influential operas of the nineteenth century, it is rarely heard today. With Olga Makarina, Krassimira Stoyanova, Marcello Giordani, and Dimitri Kavrakos. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 23 at 7.)

JUILLIARD OPERA CENTER
Julius Rudel conducts Poulenc's **"Dialogues of the Carmelites,"** in a production by Frank Corsaro. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. 769-7406. April 25 and April 27 at 8 and April 29 at 2.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
The orchestra begins a four-concert series centering on the music of Schoenberg and Webern. The first features Webern's Six Pieces for Orchestra, framed by Schumann's Symphony No. 4 and the Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 3 (with Yefim Bronfman); Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducts. (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500. April 19-21 at 8 and April 24 at 7.) ♦ David Robertson conducts Schoenberg's "Erwartung," a nail-biting mad scene for soprano and orchestra (sung by Françoise Pollet), along with Wagner's "Tristan" Prelude and Beethoven's Symphony No. 5. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 26-28 at 8 and May 1 at 7:30.)

EOS ORCHESTRA
Best known for his madcap music-theatre piece "Frankenstein!!," the Viennese composer H. K. Gruber—the first guest conductor Eos has ever had—leads music of his own (with the violinist Kurt Nikkanen) along with pieces by Weill and Hanns Eisler. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. 691-6415. April 19 at 8.)

AMERICAN COMPOSERS ORCHESTRA: "HOLLYWOOD"
The orchestra finishes its season with a celebration of American film composers, including work by Bernard Herrmann (music from "Psycho"), David Raksin (from "The Bad and the Beautiful"), Dmitri Tiomkin, Miklós Rózsa's "Spellbound Concerto" (a reworking of music for the Hitchcock film, with the pianist Scott Dunn), and the première of a concert work by Paul Chihara. Stravinsky, who hoped to write for the movies but couldn't bring himself to compromise, tags along with "Four Norwegian Moods." Dennis Russell Davies conducts. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 22 at 3.)

JUPITER SYMPHONY
Music by Elgar, Lalo (the Piano Concerto, with Makiko Hirata), Hubay, and Virgil Thomson (the "Acadian Songs and Dances"). (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. 799-1259. April 23 at 2 and 7 and April 24 at 8.)

BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Yuri Temirkanov conducts a concert of Prokofiev (the "Lieutenant Kijé" Suite), Grieg (the Piano Concerto, with Lang Lang), and Dvořák. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 26 at 8.)

NED ROREM HOSTS: "TRANSIENT GLORY"
In the last of this season's concerts, Rorem presents the Young People's Chorus of New York City, which sings new pieces by Michael Torke, John Tavener, Elena Kats-Chernin, and Nora Kroll-Rosenbaum, along with classic works by Debussy, Bartók, and others. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5550. April 28 at 8.)

NEW YORK CHAMBER SYMPHONY
Bernhard Klee conducts music by Beethoven, Schubert, Webern, and Mozart (the Piano Concerto No. 9, with Garrick Ohlsson). (Alice Tully Hall. 721-6500. April 28 at 8 and April 29 at 5.)

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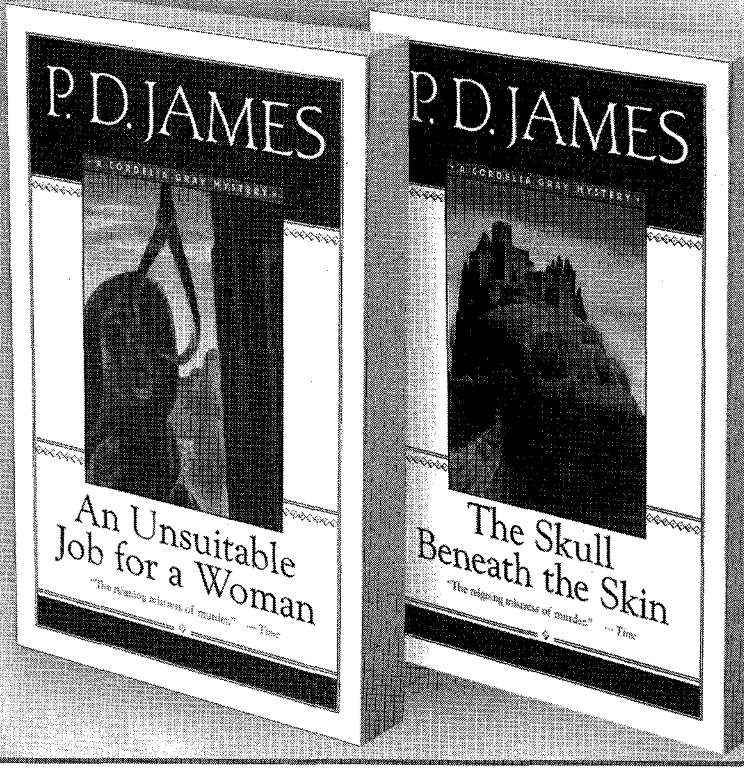
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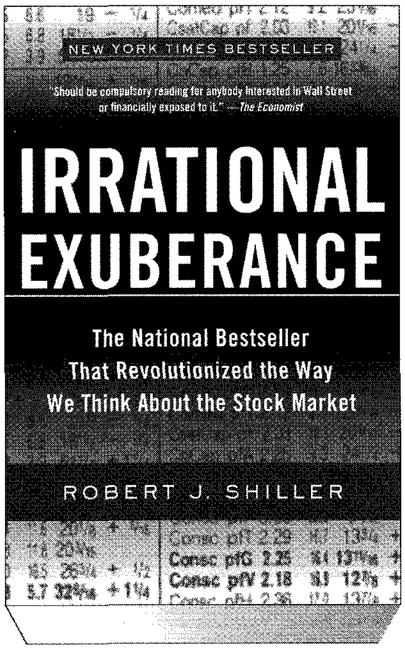
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LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS
Colin Davis settles in for the first two of a three-concert series devoted to Czech music. April 29 at 3: Music by Janáček, Martinů (the Rhapsody-Concerto, with the violist Paul Silverthorne), and Dvořák. (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500.) ♦ April 30 at 8: More music by Dvořák, along with Janáček's "Glagolitic Mass." (Avery Fisher Hall.)

RECITALS

EVOLUTIONS IN SONG
A new concert series presents a program of songs by Wolf, Beethoven, André Previn, Jake Heggie (the première of "The Starry Night," with the mezzo-soprano Kristine Jepson and the pianist John Churchwell), and others. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. April 18 at 8.)

MORTON SUBOTNICK
The composer presents his new electronic-music video, "Gestures: It Begins with Color," featuring the voice of Joan La Barbara. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793, ext. 11. April 18-21 at 8.)

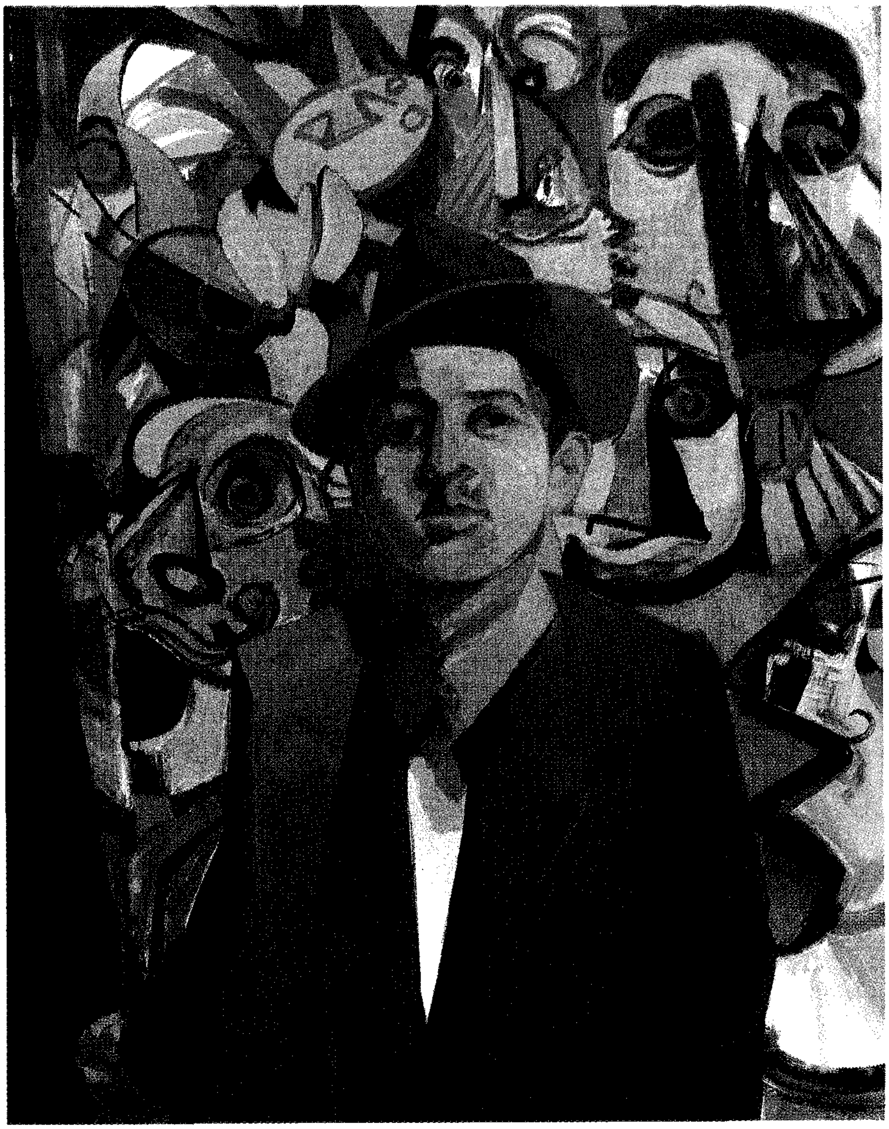
KATHLEEN BATTLE AND MARTIN KATZ
The two artists offer a recital of music by Schubert, Ravel ("Shéhérazade"), and Massenet and a selection of spirituals. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 19 at 7:30.)

BARGEMUSIC
April 19-20 at 7:30: The violinists Mark Peskanov and Hanna Lachert, the violist Katherine Green, and the cellist Andrés Díaz perform Haydn's Opus 71 quartets. ♦ April 21 at 7:30 and April 22 at 4: Peskanov and Díaz join the pianist Gerald Robbins in music by Schumann, Brahms, and Mendelssohn. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER
April 20 at 8 and April 22 at 5: Music by Dvořák and other Czech composers; the ensemble features the clarinettist David Shifrin and the bassist Edgar Meyer. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5788.) ♦ April 24 at 7:30: Meyer returns for a solo recital, accompanied by the pianist Amy Dorfman. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5788.)

DAVID KRAKAUER: "BEYOND CROSSOVER"
The range of Krakauer's clarinet playing—across the fields of classical, contemporary, jazz, and klezmer music—may seem like a crossover stunt, but the quality of his artistry puts him squarely in a performer-composer tradition that stretches back to Liszt. His program (with the pianist Brian Zeger) starts with Brahms, wends through Messiaen and Reich, and ends with a set by his own band, Klezmer Madness! (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. April 21 at 8:30.)

CHRISTIAN ZACHARIAS
The pianist presents a program of music by Mozart, Scarlatti, and Schubert. (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500. April 22 at 3.)



Erich Wolfgang Korngold's "Die Tote Stadt" ("The Dead City"), a late-Romantic love story, returns to New York City Opera on April 18, conducted by George Manahan.

RICCARDO VECCHIO

ANDREAS SCHOLL AND EDIN KARAMAZOV
The countertenor and the lutenist offer a recital of music from the Renaissance. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. April 22 at 5.)

DAWN UPSHAW AND RICHARD GOODE
At Carnegie Hall, the soprano and the pianist present songs by Haydn, Bartók, Beethoven, Mahler, Debussy, and Ives. (247-7800. April 24 at 7:30.)

MILLER THEATRE
Ensemble 21 presents music by Jason Eckardt and David Rakowski. (Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 24 at 8.) ♦ The brilliant, peculiar, and hermetic music of György Kurtág has appeared all over New York this season, but by putting his cycle "Games" up against music by Bach the Canadian pianist Louis Lortie is giving the Hungarian composer the ultimate acid test. (April 26 at 8.)

JOY IN SINGING
The organization's annual composers' concert, coördinated by Paul Sperry, celebrates the millennium with newly commissioned songs by Libby Larsen, Tom Cipullo, Ricky Ian Gordon, and others, presented along with classic works by Barber, Chanler, and Dominick Argento. This year's featured singers are the soprano Meagan Miller, the mezzo-soprano Elizabeth Shammash, and the baritone Randall Scarlata. (Merkin Concert Hall. 129 W. 67th St. April 25 at 8.)

EIGHTH BLACKBIRD
The ensemble presents new music by Paul Moravec, Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, and Frederick Rzewski. (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 27 at 7.)

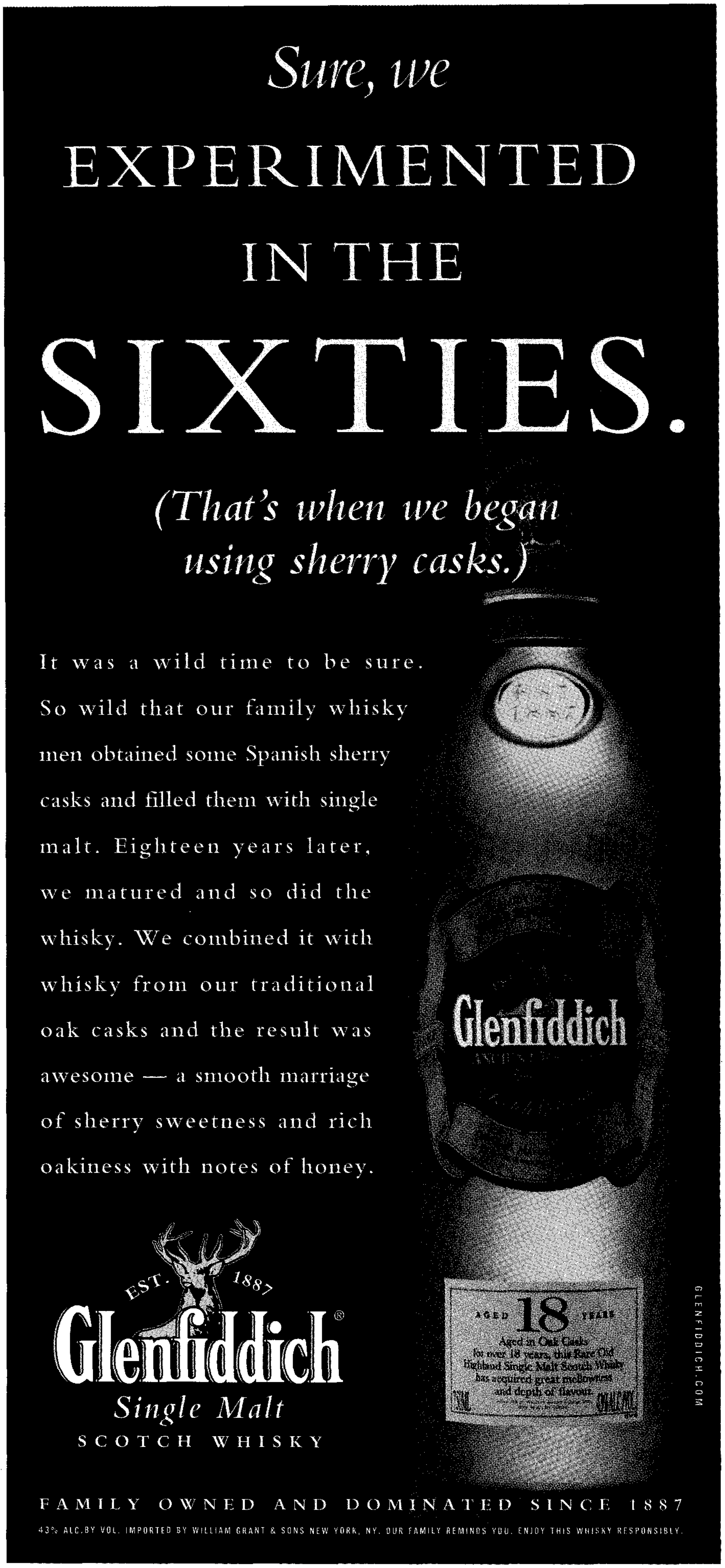
DISCANTUS
The women's vocal ensemble presents sacred music by Hildegard of Bingen and Herrad of Landsberg, in the Gotham Early Music Festival's final concert of the year. (Christ Church Cobble Hill, 320 Clinton St., at Kane St., Brooklyn. 800-627-0655. April 29 at 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

READINGS
April 18 at 7: By the poet James Fenton. (Russian Samovar, 256 W. 52nd St. Tickets at the door.) ♦ April 18 at 8: By Frank McCourt, Mark Strand, and other writers, from the anthology "The Best American Poetry 2000." (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) ♦ April 21 at 2: By the poets Elizabeth Macklin, Samuel Menashe, and Michael T. Young. (St. Agnes Branch, New York Public Library, 444 Amsterdam Ave., near 81st St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ April 28 at 4: By Anne Carson and Bei Dao, from their poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. 989-5566.)

TALKS
April 19 at 7:30: Following a screening of his 1972 Western, "C. W. Coop," Cliff Robertson, the director and the star of the film, addresses the audience. (BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn. For more information, call 718-636-4111.) ♦ April 25 at 6:30: Carlos S. Alvarado, the associate editor of the *International Journal of Parapsychology*, talks about the ghosts that reportedly haunt the Merchant's House Museum. (29 E. 4th St. 777-1089.) ♦ April 27 at 7:30: Richard Gid Powers, a professor of history at the City University of New York's Graduate Center, gives an illustrated lecture about the work of his father, the science-fiction illustrator Richard Powers. (Graduate Center, City University of New York, Fifth Ave. at 34th St. 817-8215.) ♦ April 30 at 7:30: Jim Shepard, the editor of the recently published anthology "Writers at the Movies," leads a discussion of fiction and the cinema with the authors Deborah Eisenberg, Margot Livesey, and Francine Prose. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 399-3030.)

TOUR
April 28 at 2:30: The arts collective Art in General offers guided visits to the studios of Paul Bloodgood, Eric Fischl, Shirin Neshat, Tony Oursler, Fred Tomaselli, and many other contemporary artists. For more information, call 219-0473, ext. 25.



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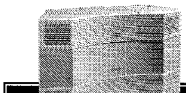

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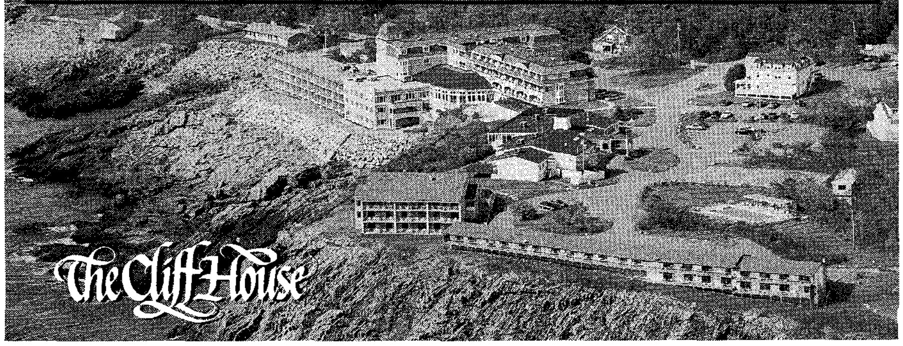

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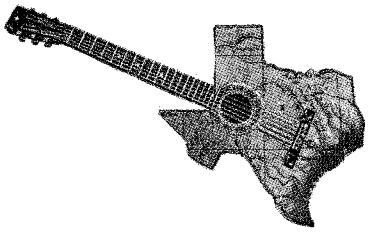
Despite the airwave-clogging success of Garth Brooks and Shania Twain, when most people think of the music that made Nashville famous it's names like Hank Williams, Merle Haggard, George Jones, and Buck Owens that come to mind. These are the four Country Music Hall of Fame artists that Barbara Ching, in her forthcoming **WRONG'S WHAT I DO BEST** (Oxford), identifies as embodying the spirit of "hard country"—an uncompromising music perennially at odds with Nashville and seldom heard on mainstream radio. Ching, a professor of English at the University of Memphis, argues that this feisty, mostly male genre is overdue for cultural analysis, claiming that its focus is "far wider than barnyards and bars" and that its "volatile blend of anger, irony, and burlesque abjection"—first cooked up by Williams—warrants serious study in the postmodern age.



Similarly, Kathleen Hudson, an English professor at Schreiner University, in Texas, takes a scholarly interest in country songcraft in **TELLING STORIES, WRITING SONGS** (Texas). This literate anthology of interviews gathers wisdom from such legendary Texans as Willie Nelson, Tanya Tucker, Lyle Lovett, and Joe Ely; the last, citing influences far from Nashville's Music Row, tells Hudson, "Maybe I read too many Cormac McCarthy books . . . and it's rubbing off."

The many strains of alternative country come together in David Goodman's **MODERN TWANG** (Dowling), an encyclopedia of latter-day offshoots, including gay country, cowpunk, and outlaw. As divergent as these flourishing forms of American music are, they all aspire to what Ching describes as hard country's "taut balance of disgrace and glory, of backwardness and hipness."

—*Mark Rozzo*

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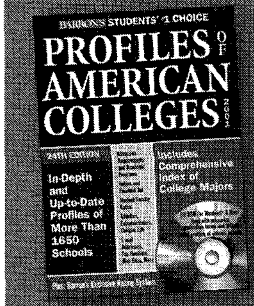
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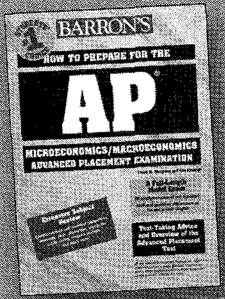
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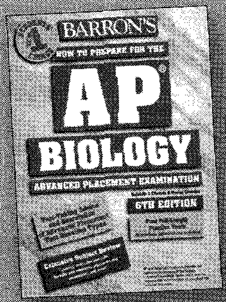
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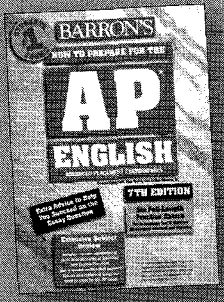
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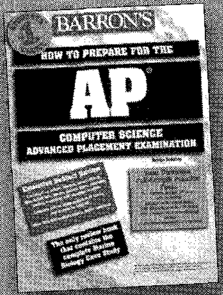
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MOVIES OPENING

THE BODY
A priest (Antonio Banderas) and an archeologist (Olivia Williams) discover the body of Jesus in this drama written and directed by Jonas McCord. Opening April 20.

BOYS TO MEN
Four award-winning short films with gay themes. Opening April 27. (Quad Cinema.)

THE CENTER OF THE WORLD
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening April 18.

THE CHARCOAL PEOPLE
A documentary about Brazilian migrant workers, directed by Nigel Noble. In Portuguese. Opening April 20. (The Screening Room.)

THE CLAIM
Michael Winterbottom directed this historical drama set in a Sierra Nevada mining town. With Peter Mullan, Natassja Kinski, Wes Bentley, and Sarah Polley. Opening April 20.

CROCODILE DUNDEE IN LOS ANGELES
The third installment of the comedy series, in which Dundee (Paul Hogan) makes a movie about his life. Opening April 20.

DRIVEN
Renny Harlin directs a script written by Sylvester Stallone about the world of Indy 500-style car racing. With Til Schweiger, Burt Reynolds, and Stallone. Opening April 27.

THE END OF THE ROAD
A documentary that captures the final 1995 tour of the Grateful Dead, directed by Brent Meeske. Opening April 27. (The Screening Room.)

THE FORSAKEN
Humans and vampires are at war in this horror film written and directed by J. S. Cardone. Opening April 27.

FREDDY GOT FINGERED
Tom Green plays a young man who moves back in with his parents and decides to stay, in a comedy he wrote and directed. Opening April 20.

THE GOLDEN BOWL
A Merchant-Ivory adaptation of Henry James's novel of mismatched marriages. With Kate Beckinsale, Uma Thurman, Nick Nolte, and Jeremy Northam. Opening April 27.

HIDDEN WARS OF DESERT STORM
Gerard Ungerman and Audrey Brohy directed this documentary, which examines various controversies surrounding the Gulf War. Opening April 20. (Cinema Village.)

HIT THEM HARD
A documentary about Brazilian pilots in the Second World War. Erik de Castro directed. Opening April 20. (Pioneer.)

THE LOW DOWN
Jamie Thraves wrote and directed this drama about a group of London twentysomethings moving on from their student days. Opening April 20. (State.)

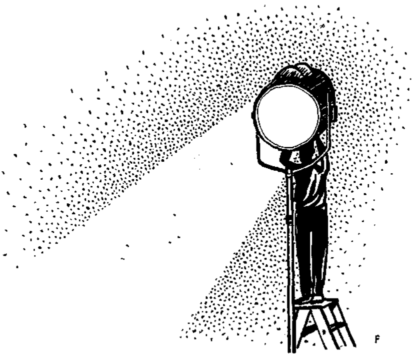
THE LUZHIN DEFENCE
An adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov's novel about a Russian chess genius. With John Turturro and Emily Watson. Directed by Marleen Gorris. Opening April 20.

ONE NIGHT AT MC COOL'S
Three men (Matt Dillon, John Goodman, and Paul Reiser) become infatuated with the same woman (Liv Tyler) in a comedy directed by Harald Zwart. Also with Michael Douglas. Opening April 27.

PIE IN THE SKY:
THE BRIGID BERLIN STORY
The self-proclaimed "overweight troublemaker" and Warhol confidante is the subject of a documentary directed by Vincent and Shelly Dunn Fremont. Opening April 25. (Film Forum.)

TOWN AND COUNTRY
A romantic comedy about the midlife crisis of an architect, played by Warren Beatty. With Diane Keaton, Goldie Hawn, and Garry Shandling. Directed by Peter Chelsom. Opening April 27.

THE VISIT
A drama about a young inmate and his prison psychologist. With Hill Harper, Phylicia Rashad, and Billy Dee Williams. Opening April 20.



WITH A FRIEND LIKE HARRY . . .
Dominik Moll directed this thriller about a family that is visited by a mysterious old friend while on vacation. In French. Opening April 20.

FILM NOTES

AMORES PERROS
This three-part tale, the début directorial effort of Alejandro González Iñárritu, gives you a pretty good idea of what life is like in Mexico City and leaves you with an enduring wish never to drive its streets at rush hour. The first section chronicles the near-incestuous affair between Octavio (Gael García Bernal) and his sister-in-law Susana (Vanessa Bauche). The second, which sags with weary symbolism, is about a model who loses a leg. The third and strongest tells of an ex-terrorist and tramp (Emilio Echevarría) who kills for money and dreams of love. The connective tissue between these folks is a car crash, and each of them also either owns or trains dogs. (If your taste in movies doesn't run to pooches with bloody flanks and broken necks, you should probably stay away.) Iñárritu's style carries the day; it may be heated and hectic, but he doesn't bully you into judging these frazzled figures, and, in Echevarría, he has found a figure of great and grimy nobility. In Spanish.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 4/2/01.) (BAM Rose Cinemas, East 85th Street, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Union Square.)

BLOW
This story of the real-life cocaine dealer George Jung—a Massachusetts man who sold the Medellín cartel's dope to mainstream America in the seventies—would seem to offer a perfect star vehicle for Johnny Depp, but the unconvincing narrative doesn't allow him to shape a performance. The director, Ted Demme, and the screenwriters, David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes, tell the story of George's rise as a series of semi-comic riffs on his unwittingness—how casually he operated, how oblivious he was to risk and treachery on all sides. Apart from one scary episode with Pablo Escobar, the scenes are flimsily staged—thin and underdone. Now and then Demme throws in the towel and resorts to a rapid montage of shots meant to convey the giddy drug life, but this isn't directing, and it isn't evocation, either; it's more like flinging a loosely pasted scrapbook onto the floor and asking the audience to sort it out.—*David Denby* (4/9/01) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY
Helen Fielding's creation has finally arrived onscreen; in place of her wiry, worried tone we now find an almost confident pleasure in mishaps and man-hunting. The director, Sharon Maguire, has shaped the fretful original into a basic romantic comedy, leaving an aching Bridget (Renée Zellweger) with a choice of nice Mr. Darcy (Colin Firth) or dastardly Daniel Cleaver (Hugh Grant). These three leads are much better than the movie they front; some of the secondary characters are dangerously thin, although Jim Broadbent is as crumpled and reliable as ever in the role of our heroine's dad. Bridget mania, meanwhile, shows no signs of abating, but one hopes that this film might herald the end of the affair; after all, self-pity has its limitations as the engine of drama, and the idea that a young woman might be not just unhappy but somehow incomplete without a man would have struck even Jane Austen as laughably passé.—*A.L.* (4/16/01) (Battery Park 16, Cinema I, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Orpheum VII, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Village Theatre VII.)

CHOPPER
The tale of a brute and a braggart, all the more daunting for being drawn from life; Mark Brandon Read (Eric Bana), lovingly known as Chopper, was one of the most outlandishly violent—and certainly most famous—prisoners in Australia's jails. Andrew Dominik's movie tracks him from the late nineteen-seventies to the early nineties, watching him make and remake enemies while cleaving ominously to old friends. The film steps up to its neck in blood, yet it's hardly your standard exploitation flick. Chopper may be exploiting the prison system, and the media have fun exploiting his legend, but there is also a strain of comic independence in the man, and the picture ends up as a thoroughly Australian, if discordant, hymn to the peculiar virtues of mateship. Chopper, for some unfathomable reason, is still alive.—*A.L.* (4/16/01) (Film Forum.)

THE CIRCLE
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

THE DAY I BECAME A WOMAN
How does an Iranian filmmaker elude censorship and depict, with fidelity, the place of women in Islamic society? Marzieh Meshkini made three short films (script approval is not required for shorts) and then combined them into a feature. Even with this strategy, the director cloaks her intentions in alluring, suggestive imagery. The three sections present allegories for the stages of a woman's life. The first gets its power from its circumstances—the last hour of childhood before a nine-year-old girl must wear a chador. More thrilling and desperate is the second, in which a young woman on a bicycle is fleeing from her husband on horseback. The third episode, about old age, tells of a widow's bemused shopping spree and extends the mysteries of the first two. It's a film without speechifying or conclusions, but that's hardly a deficit—the unformed quality is faithful to the film's portrait of Iranian women in difficult transition. In Farsi.—*Michael Agger* (State.)

THE DISH
A pleasant, even charming, movie, but so determinedly small-scale and personal that it flirts with innocuousness. In a remote, unknown Australian town, a group of local technicians, together with an American from NASA, man a giant telescope tracking the moon shot in 1969. All sorts of embarrassing snafus occur just as the whole world is watching, and the various ambitions and jealousies of the men play into the mess. There's a touching moment when the entire town gathers around the TV to watch Neil Armstrong's first step, and they all realize that he and they have become part of history. Rob Sitch directed.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

ENEMY AT THE GATES
During the siege of Stalingrad, two snipers—an innocent Red Army peasant from the Urals (Jude Law) and an aristocratic Nazi deer hunter (Ed Harris)—stalk each other in the mucky ruins. This elaborate duel might have been perversely interesting as a kind of military sick joke if the absurdity of it were the point. But the director Jean-Jacques Annaud and his long-time collaborator, the producer-writer Alain Godard, make it seem like the entire battle hinged on the struggle between the two specialists, and the story rapidly loses common sense.—*D.D.* (3/26/01) (Battery Park 16, Coronet Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Quad Cinema, and Village Theatre VII.)

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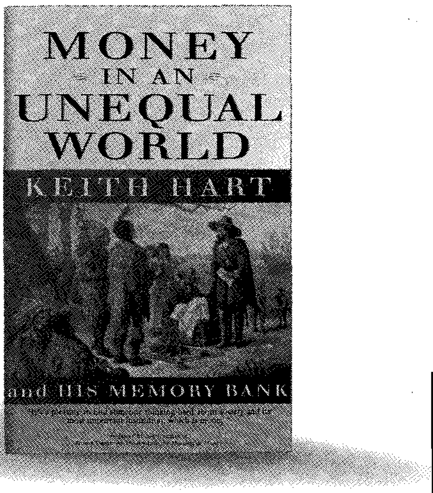
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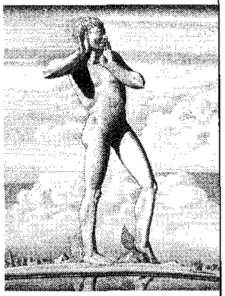
A. M. Cassandre, "Thomson" 1931. At auction May 7.



Rockwell Kent, one of six ink and crayon drawings for Time Magazine deluxe gift portfolio, circa 1938. At auction May 17.

Mon May 7 **Modernist Posters**
10:30am *Inquiries:* Nicholas D. Lowry
Illustrated Catalogue: $35

Thur May 17 **American Watercolors & Drawings**
10:30am *Inquiries:* Todd Weyman
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Members of the Company, photographed by ©Raymond Meeks on the Brooklyn Bridge.

15 MINUTES
There's life and fun in this trashy pulse-of-the-city thriller, much of which is set in and around the media pits of Times Square. Two recent émigrés kick the madness into motion—a Czech psychopath (Karel Roden), who takes the promise of American freedom with alarming literalness, and a movie-loving Russian (Oleg Taktarov), who films his partner's crimes. These two violent screwballs are pursued by a celebrated police detective (Robert De Niro) and a young fire marshall (Edward Burns). Director John Herzfeld serves up fires, knifings, and shootouts, and manages, in the midst of the extreme mayhem, to hammer away at the American habit of turning criminals into media figures.—*D.D.* (3/26/01) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Sutton 1 and 2, and Union Square.)

THE GLEANERS AND I
The French filmmaker Agnès Varda, digital camera in hand, roams around her country recording the movements of gleaners. Traditionally, as in the archetypal Millet painting, gleaners were women who gathered the remains of the harvest; their modern counterparts are mostly scavengers, searching in dumpsters and other likely places. The French, of course, give the practice a wonderfully perverse twist—many glean by choice, disdainful of wastefulness and rampant consumerism. Varda's photographic eye is much in evidence, and her narration is both shrewd and whimsical. When she leaves a camera on accidentally, she uses the unintended footage to create a "dance of the lens cap," a filmic gleaning that acts as a perfect grace note. In French.—*M.A.* (Film Forum.)

HEARTBREAKERS
A comedy that has a neat premise, but which is no more than occasionally funny. Max (Sigourney Weaver) and Page (Jennifer Love Hewitt) are a mother-daughter confidence team. Max lures men into marriage, and the libidinous Page leads them into adultery, which gives Max grounds for highly advantageous divorce settlements. Weaver, as willful as always, proves that at fifty-one she can play a femme fatale but not that she can do it with delight. She's been bizarrely matched up with Hewitt—all high round breasts and swivelling rear—who darts here and there and speaks in a soul-curdling snarl, and the most depressing thing about the film is that its mediocrity may be intentional.—*D.D.* (4/9/01) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Union Square, and Waverly.)

IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE
The latest film from the talented young Hong Kong writer-director Wong Kar Wai makes us pant for adultery. In the early sixties, in a community of Shanghai refugees living in Hong Kong, Mrs. Chan (Maggie Cheung) and Mr. Chow (Tony Leung) are next-door neighbors in a friendly apartment building. The perfectly dressed and coiffed couple meet, talk, and realize that their frequently travelling spouses are off having an affair with each other. What to do? The movie is all about sensual anticipation. Nat King Cole croons on the soundtrack, and the camera caresses the rain on the streets and the texture of a stone wall in the semi-darkness. So skillfully does the director bring us to a state of breathless expectation that when he refuses to deliver the goods he almost seems to have invented a new form of perversion. In Cantonese and French.—*D.D.* (2/5/01) (Village East Cinemas.)

JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS
A teen movie that's something of a put-on. A milquetoast record promoter (Alan Cumming) and his bitchy boss (Parker Posey) implant messages in pop songs which tell young America which clothes to buy and stars to like (e.g., "Heath Ledger is the new Matt Damon"). Into their clutches stumble Josie and the Pussycats, of Archie Comics fame, and, thanks to subliminal suggestion, the band's songs soon top the charts. Throughout all the major-chord fun, the writing and directing team of Harry Elfont and Deborah Kaplan continually wink at the audience. Corporate logos (Starbucks, Target, Revlon) are pasted everywhere; a rebellious record-store employee gets kidnapped by an MTV van; the Manhattan skyline is accessorized with super-

sized McDonald's arches. These games are fine and frequently hilarious, but they spring from a one-note cleverness; what could have been a lark becomes another hollow display of irony. With Rachael Leigh Cook, Rosario Dawson, and Tara Reid as the Pussycats.—*M.A.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, and Union Square.)

MEMENTO
Guy Pearce ("L.A. Confidential") plays Leonard, a former insurance investigator who has mislaid his short-term memory; leave the room and come back ten minutes later, and he won't remember you. To help his case, and to solve the apparent murder of his wife, Leonard tattoos himself with memoranda and drives around the lowlier districts of L.A. County. At the same time, he has a couple of acquaintances (Carrie-Anne Moss and Joe Pantoliano) who seem eager both to support Leonard and to use his condition for their own unscrupulous ends. There is a fine, despairing comedy to these events—not just in our fidgety hero, but in the constant thwarting of our need to know. The young British writer and director Christopher Nolan, who has every intention of putting us through the mill, doubles his fun by running the whole story backward. Damn him.—*A.L.* (3/19/01) (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Metro Cinema 1 and 2.)

PIERROT LE FOU
Jean-Luc Godard's unresolved, disturbing 1965 film: it gets to you. The narrative encompasses a satire of advertising, and existential stalemate, political violence, and romance, all shot—in color—in a hard-edge style. With Jean-Paul Belmondo as Ferdinand, who leaves his rich wife in Paris and goes off to the South of France with the restless Marianne (Anna Karina); he comes to an unforgettably explosive end. Also with Jimmy Karoubi as the dwarf, Samuel Fuller as himself, and a glimpse of Jean-Pierre Léaud. The script (by Godard) has its origins in the novel "Obsession," by Lionel White. In French.—*Pauline Kael* (American Museum of the Moving Image; April 28-29.)

POLLOCK
A dogged march through the life and work of Jackson Pollock, starting in the early nineteen-forties, when Lee Krasner (Marcia Gay Harden) first approached him in Greenwich Village, continuing through their marriage and other tempests, and ending gloomily in a car wreck in 1956. The film was directed by Ed Harris, who also plays the artist. His face doesn't much resemble that of Pollock, but Harris has mastered the hunched amble and the glaring gaze. His best scenes are not the boozy rants but the quiet times with a cigarette and a brush—or, latterly, a dripping stick. Pollock's drinking was an interruption of his art, not a spur to it, and the film can do little to connect the two; we are left with a sombre study of discontent, enlivened by the appearance of Jennifer Connelly as the painter's final girlfriend. What she saw in him, by that stage, is anybody's guess.—*A.L.* (3/5/01) (Angelika Film Center, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

SUNRISE
A near-masterpiece, made in Hollywood in 1927 by the great German director F. W. Murnau, who was given contractual assurance that there would be no interference by the studio. The opening title reads, "This story of a Man and his Wife is of nowhere and everywhere, you might hear it anywhere and at any time." The man (George O'Brien) and his wife (Janet Gaynor) are rural Americans; their happiness is disrupted by a city temptress (Margaret Livingston) who seduces the man and persuades him to drown his wife. The story is told in a flowing, lyrical German manner that is extraordinarily sensual, yet perhaps too self-conscious, too fablelike for American audiences. The film failed commercially, and on his next two Fox projects Murnau didn't have the same freedom. There are some masterly sequences: the seduction under a full moon, the wife's flight (she boards a trolley). Silent.—*P.K.* (Museum of Modern Art; April 20 and April 26.)

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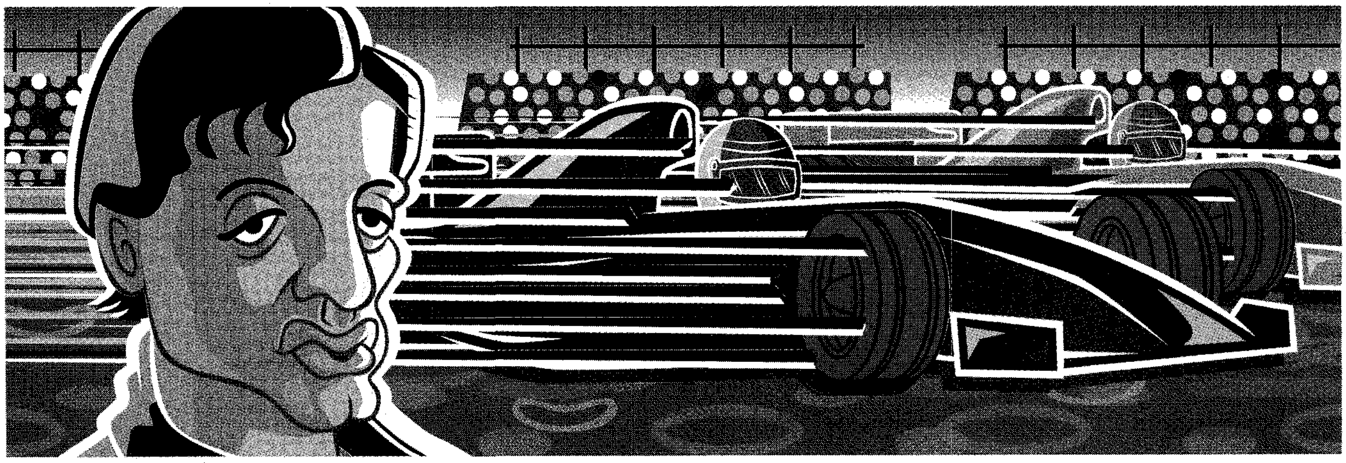
THE TAILOR OF PANAMA
A messy adaptation of the John le Carré novel, directed by John Boorman. As Andy Osnard, Pierce Brosnan plays an anti-Bond: the spy who loves nobody except himself. He is sent to Panama, where he recruits a local tailor, Harry Pendel (Geoffrey Rush)—who, like so many le Carré creations, has constructed the story of himself to escape from a shameful, secret past. On the evidence of Harry's tips, Osnard urges London and Washington to back a democratic coup to the tune of several million dollars. Almost no one in this picture is free of corruption, moral, sexual, or financial; the only virtuous character, Harry's wife, Louisa (Jamie Lee Curtis), is barely allowed room to breathe. Boorman wants to turn the novel's rueful satire into something sharp and sweaty, but the tone veers all over the place, and the plot feels like reckless fantasy.—*A.L.* (4/2/01) (Battery Park 16, Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.)

LA TERRA TREMA
Luchino Visconti's 1947 neorealist tragedy, set among the exploited Sicilian fishermen, is long and full of political clichés, and yet in its solemnity and beauty it achieves a true epic vision. The film is lyrical yet austere, and it's beautifully proportioned. It may be the best boring movie ever made: although you might have to get up and stretch a few times, you're not likely to want to leave. Filmed on location in Aci-Trezza, Sicily. In Sicilian dialect.—*P.K.* (Guggenheim Museum; April 20-21 and Museum of Modern Art; April 27-28.)



Opening April 27, "Driven," a car-racing picture with Sylvester Stallone.

MICHAEL WELDON

TOBY DAMMIT
The finest forty minutes of Fellini's late career. This free adaptation of Poe's short story "Never Bet the Devil Your Head" stars Terence Stamp as Toby Dammit, a burnt-out swingin'-England movie star. Made in 1968, it's part period piece, part prophecy. Fellini's barbs at structuralist cinema and other forms of fetishism carry a sharper sting today. Stamp's performance prefigures the drugged-out, neurasthenic chic of movies with Mick Jagger and David Bowie, while the rotten Italian Western he agrees to make, a parable of a frontier Christ with a six-shooter, anticipates Eastwood's torpid turkey "Pale Rider." Most important, from the moment Toby arrives at a Rome airport until his final race after the devil—a gorgeous little blond girl with a bouncing ball—Fellini creates a persuasive media miasma of paparazzi, robotlike TV workers, and celebrities who caricature themselves. In French.—*Michael Sragow* (Museum of Modern Art; April 26 and April 28.)

THE WIDOW OF SAINT-PIERRE
In the French colony of Saint-Pierre (an island near Newfoundland) during the middle of the nineteenth century, a captain of the guard (Daniel Auteuil) and his high-minded wife (Juliette Binoche) adopt as their protégé a man who has committed a meaningless murder (Emir Kusturica). The murderer is a sweetheart—a gentle and educable fellow. As the community awaits the arrival of a guillotine and an executioner, the captain and his wife refuse to bow to the logic of capital punishment or to administrative bloody-mindedness. For all its stern moral conviction, Patrice Leconte's film manages to duck the only question worth asking: would a less sympathetic murderer be worth saving from the blade? In French.—*D.D.* (Paris.)

ALSO PLAYING

BEFORE NIGHT FALLS (1/8/01)
Chelsea Cinemas and Quad Cinema.

CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON (12/11/00)
Angelika Film Center, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 64th and 2nd.

JOE DIRT
Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.

KEEP THE RIVER ON YOUR RIGHT
Quad Cinema.

KINGDOM COME
Chelsea West, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Olympia I and II, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Union Square.

SHADOW MAGIC
Eastside Playhouse and Quad Cinema.

SMELL OF CAMPHOR, FRAGRANCE OF JASMINE
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

SPY KIDS
Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema I, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.

TRAFFIC (12/25/00 & 1/1/01)
Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and 72nd Street East.

YI YI (1/8/01)
Cinema Village.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

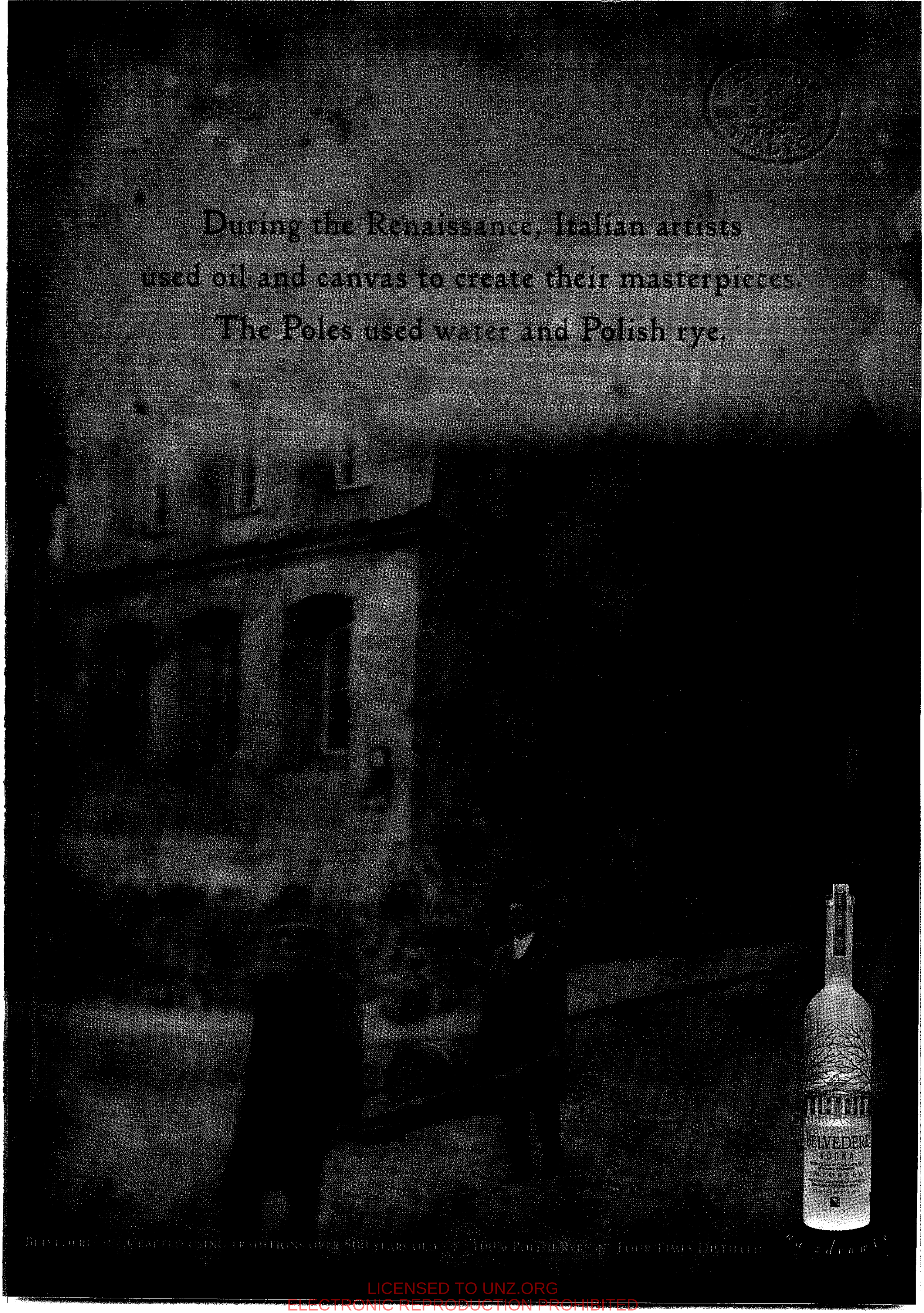
Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St. (945-3418).
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600).
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—"Composing for Film." April 21 at 2: "Laura" (1944, Otto Preminger). ♦ April 21 at 5: "The Bad and the Beautiful" (1952, Vincente Minnelli). ♦ April 28 at 2 and 4:30 and April 29 at 4:30: "Pierrot le Fou" (†). ♦ April 29 at 2: "A Woman of Paris" (1923, Charlie Chaplin; silent).

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—April 18-23: "The Havana Film Festival," recent cinema from Latin America. ♦ April 20-May 1: "Two Taiwanese Masters," a retrospective of films directed by Lee Hsing and Wang T'ung.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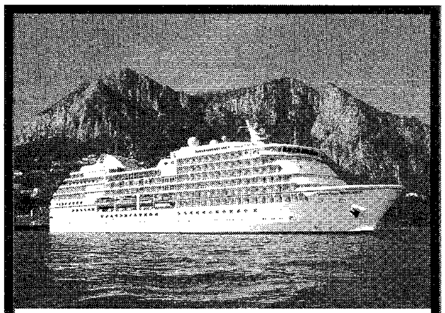

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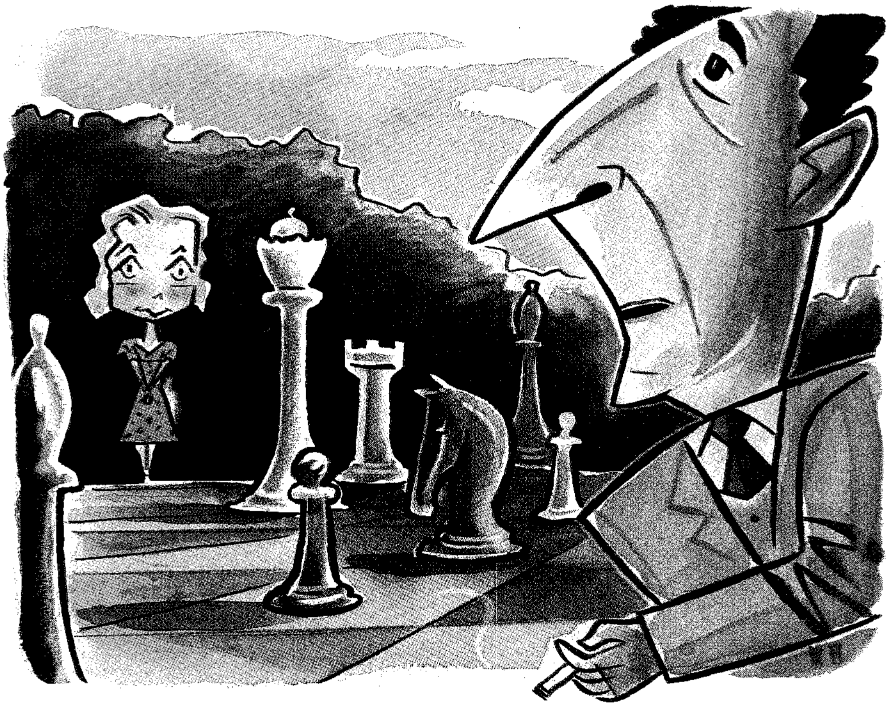


Opening April 20, Emily Watson and John Turturro in "The Luzhin Defence."

MARCELLUS HALL

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (777-3456)—April 18 at 4:30, 6:30, and 9:30: "Requiem for a Dream" (2000, Darren Aronofsky). ♦ April 19 at 4:30 and 7:30: "J. W. Coop" (1972, Cliff Robertson). ♦ April 20 at 4, 6:30, and 9:30: "Marat/Sade" (1966, Peter Brook). ♦ April 21 at 6:50 and 9:10: "Moderato Cantabile" (1960, Brook). ♦ April 22 at 6:50 and 9:10: "Lord of the Flies" (1963, Brook). ♦ April 23 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "The Human Beast" (1938, Jean Renoir; in French). ♦ April 24 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "On the Comet" (1970, Karel Zeman; in Czech). ♦ April 25 at 7:30: "Children of Divorce" (1927, Frank Lloyd; silent). ♦ The Brooklyn Jewish Film Festival. April 26 at 7:30: "Kippur" (2000, Amos Gitai; in Hebrew). ♦ April 27 at 6:30: "The Anarchist and the Capitalist," two documentaries from Canada. ♦ April 27 at 9:30 and April 29 at 3: "Solomon and Gaenor" (1999, Paul Morrison; in Welsh, English, and Yiddish). ♦ April 28 at 2: "The Sorrow and the Pity" (1971, Marcel Ophuls; in French). ♦ April 28 at 7:30: "The Optimists" (2000, Lisa and Jacky Comforti; in English, Hebrew, and Bulgarian). ♦ April 28 at 9:30: "Weapons of the Spirit" (1990, Pierre Sauvage). ♦ April 29 at 5:15: Short films by Jay Rosenblatt (2000). ♦ April 29 at 7:30: "Mendel" (1997, Alexander Rosler). ♦ April 30 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Grand Illusion" (1937, Renoir; in French).

CINEMA CLASSICS
332 E. 11th St. (971-1015)—April 18-19 at 8 and 10: "One, Two, Three" (1961, Billy Wilder). ♦ April 20-22 at 8 and 10: "The Long Goodbye" (1973, Robert Altman). ♦ April 23-24 at 7:40 and 10:05: "Buffalo Bill and the Indians" (1976, Altman). ♦ April 25-26 at 8 and 10: "Aria" (1998, Altman et al.). ♦ April 27 and April 30 at 7:30 and 10:20 and April 28-29 at 5, 8, and 11: "Nashville" (1975, Altman).

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through April 26: The films of Ousmane Sembene. All films are in French and Wolof. April 18-20 at 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, and 9:50: "Mandabi" (1968). ♦ April 21-23 at 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, and 9:15: "Ceddo" (1977). ♦ April 24-26 at 1, 3:45, 6:30, and 9:15: "Camp De Thiaroye" (1987). ♦ April 27-May 1: "Once Upon a Time in China" (1991, Tsui Hark; in Cantonese).

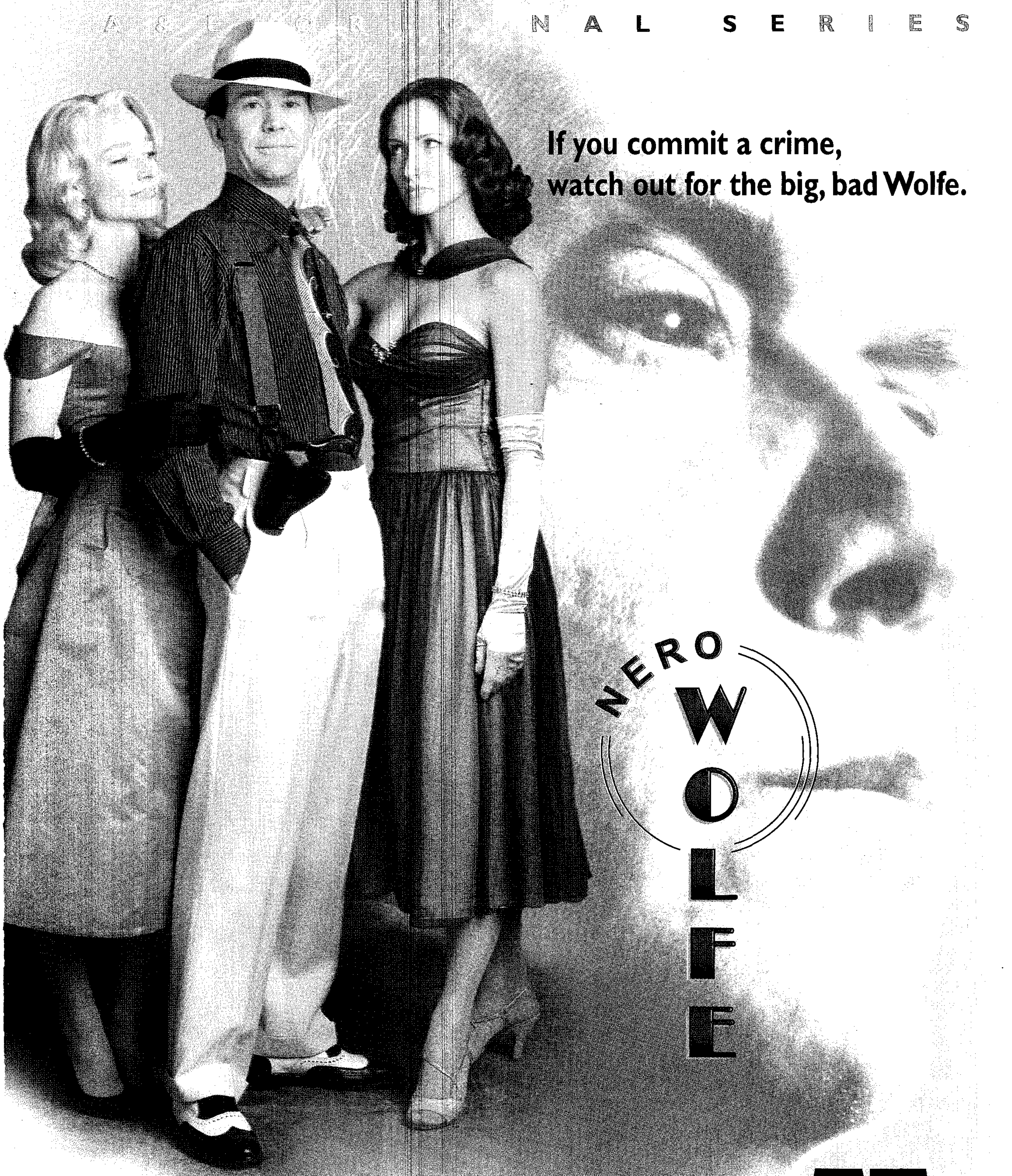
GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (360-4321)—"Conversations Between Shadows and Light: Italian Cinematography." All films are in Italian. April 18 at 7 and April 21 at 3: "Umberto D" (1952, Vittorio De Sica). ♦ April 20-21 at 7: "La Terra Trema" (†). ♦ April 25 and April 28 at 7: "La Dolce Vita" (1960, Federico Fellini). ♦ April 27 at 7 and April 28 at 3: "The Flowers of St. Francis" (1950, Roberto Rossellini).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Through April 26: "Silent Embrace: Five Love Stories from the Archives." April 20 at 7 and April 26 at 2:30: "Sunrise" (†). ♦ April 21 at 2 and April 23 at 6: "True Heart Susie" (1919, D. W. Griffith; silent). ♦ April 21 at 5 and April 23 at 2:30: "Male and Female" (1919, Nelson De Mille; silent). ♦ April 22 at 2 and April 24 at 6: "Lilac Time" (1928, George Fitzmaurice; silent). ♦ April 22 at 5 and April 24 at 2: "Seventh Heaven" (1927, Frank Borzage; silent). ♦ Through April 30: "Second Act: Fourth Season," unreleased, rarely shown Italian movies. All films are in Italian. April 26 at 6 and April 28 at 2: "Toby Dammit" (†) and "The Miracle" (1948, Roberto Rossellini). ♦ April 27 at 2:30 and April 28 at 4:30: "La Terra Trema" (†). ♦ April 27 at 6 and April 30 at 2:30: "Four Steps in the Clouds" (1942, Alessandro Blasetti). ♦ April 27 at 8 and April 29 at 5: "Palombella Rossa" (1989, Nanni Moretti). ♦ April 29 at 2 and April 30 at 6: "A Difficult Life" (1961, Dino Risi).

MUSEUM OF TELEVISION & RADIO
25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Through April 29: Screenings of "Traffik," the British miniseries that inspired Steven Soderbergh's "Traffic." Thursdays at 6 and Saturdays at 2: Episodes One and Two. ♦ Fridays at 6 and Sundays at 2: Episodes Three, Four, and Five. ♦ Through May 13: "Nick Park's World: The Eccentric Adventures of Wallace and Gromit." Tuesdays through Sundays at 1 and Thursdays and Fridays at 6.

SYMPHONY SPACE
2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400)—"Cinema Italian Style." All films are in Italian. April 24 at 7: "Night of the Shooting Stars" (1981, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani). ♦ April 24 at 9: "La Famiglia" (1987, Ettore Scola). ♦ May 1 at 7: "China Is Near" (1967, Marco Bellocchio). ♦ May 1 at 8:45: "Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man" (1981, Bernardo Bertolucci).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through April 26: "Contemporary Films from Britain." ♦ April 27-May 1: "Recent Argentine Cinema." ♦ Movies for kids. April 21-22 at 2: "The Secret Garden" (1993, Agnieska Holland). ♦ April 28 at 2: "The White Balloon" (1995, Jafar Panahi; in Farsi).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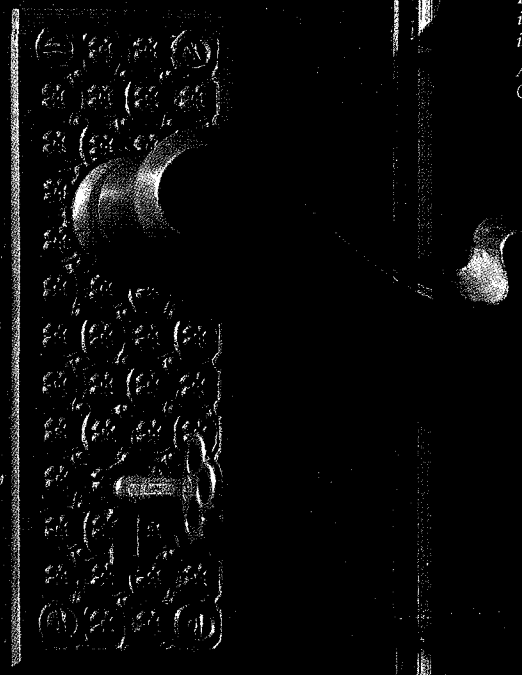

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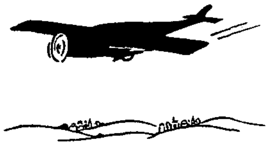
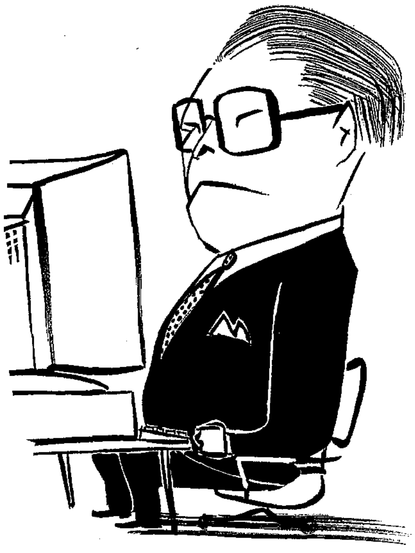


On March 15th, two weeks before Chinese and American aircraft collided in the skies above the South China Sea, Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Prime Minister, made a public apology in Beijing. "I want to apologize and reflect on my own work," he said, regarding a mysterious explosion that killed forty-two people in a Jiangxi Province school. Thirty-eight of the dead were children. The students, aged nine to eleven, had probably been producing fireworks in a forced "work-study" program designed to help pay the local school budget. This was an embarrassment, to say the least.

The confession was unprecedented. There is no tradition of public apology by Chinese leaders. Quite the contrary, there has always been a vaguely Confucian assumption of patriarchal infallibility. Even after Mao Zedong's insane crusades caused the death of millions of people, Deng Xiaoping famously calculated that Mao's actions had been seventy per cent correct. This was seen as a breakthrough in candor.

Zhu Rongji's admission, though startling, was oblique. He apologized for the explosion. He did not refute the official government story that the blast had been caused by a mad bomber. He did not admit that the children were being forced to make fireworks. He promised an investigation. And yet the moment may prove tectonic in modern Chinese history: Zhu had been compelled by the power of public opinion to efface himself. According to the *Times*, the mad-bomber story "caused a barrage of caustic criticism on Internet chat rooms." The outrage quickly radiated out from the local newspapers and relatively tiny online community to the general public. The government's story seemed ridiculous; Zhu Rongji, who had publicly supported the official account, was in danger of seeming ridiculous, too. "History can never be covered up," he said. "The investigation will continue until we really get the full picture."

The school explosion in Jiangxi has curious resonance now. Certainly, Zhu's apology gives some context to President Jiang Zemin's meretricious demand for an American apology. More important, the power of public opinion to induce a humiliating admission from the Chinese leadership in the Jiangxi tragedy gives some credibility to the astounding reports that rampant anger and nationalism expressed on the Internet—those pesky Chinese chat rooms, once again—were having an influence on President Jiang's decision to remain adamant in the spy-plane case.


President Jiang Zemin

TOM BACHTELL

The Chinese military and an ingrained national hypersensitivity to perceived violations of sovereignty were undoubtedly more influential factors than public opinion in the leadership's intransigence. The South China Sea incident was bound to be resolved sooner or later (though a double "very sorry" letter from the Clinton Administration probably wouldn't have been treated as such a triumph by the American media).

But the birth of a China where public opinion actually matters may be a far more significant development. In a way, the sudden flowering of free (or free-ish) speech can be seen as a partial vindication of the Bush-Clinton-Bush policy of "engagement" with China—a policy that can be described, quite simply, as an abiding faith in the civilizing potential of private enterprise. Free markets demand a freer flow of information, the theory goes; and freer markets will create a Chinese middle class, which will, in turn, demand certain legal rights and protections. And, while it is true that the Beijing government remains repressive and anachronistic, it is also true that the growing Internet community and the kudzu-like proliferation of cell phones, satellite television, and for-profit newspapers have irrevocably changed the quality of life and governance in China. "You can't publicly say Jiang Zemin is an idiot and should be removed," says Kenneth Lieberthal, of the University of Michigan, who was an Asia-policy specialist for the National Security Council in the Clinton Administration. "But you can say almost anything else. You can say the Communist Party is corrupt. You can say the government is lying—as was the case in the Jiangxi Province explosion. The availability of information has changed the game in China in ways that no one, including the leadership, quite understands yet."

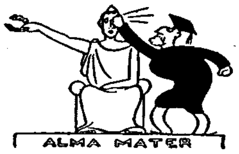
This is not necessarily good news. Chinese populism may turn out to be xenophobic, excessive, and ugly—a force that pushes the government toward more extreme, less nuanced positions (as it apparently has in the South China Sea incident). Certainly, a vast sense of national grievance exists, an anger that needs no encouragement from Beijing: anger at the Europeans who pillaged the country in the nineteenth century; at the Japanese, who ravaged the country during the Second World War (the Chinese demanded an apology from them, too, and eventually sort of received one); and, to a lesser extent, at the United States, for not paying sufficient respect. "I have yet to meet an average Chinese who believes that the United States didn't bomb their embassy in Belgrade on purpose," Lieberthal says.

The United States has been fortunate in its enemies. There have always been tyrants, comic-book villains—Hitler, Stalin, Tojo, Saddam Hussein. Public expressions of anti-Americanism always seemed contrived, state-organized. We could entertain the illusion that the average Russian or Cuban or Iraqi secretly admired us. But that is no longer the case in China. The pride and prejudices of the Chinese people cannot be taken for granted—an exhilarating development, and no doubt a worrisome one in Washington as well as Beijing.

—*Joe Klein*

SCHOOL TIES

CAN YALE BRING BACK BUSH?



Robert Rubin (L.L.B., '64) will be there. So will Tom Wolfe (Ph.D., '57), Anita Hill (J.D., '80), Wendy Wasserstein (M.F.A., '76), and Garry Trudeau ('70). But, unfortunately, it seems that George W. Bush ('68), Yale's most influential alumnus, has decided not to show up at his alma mater's invitation-only three-hundredth-birthday party next weekend.

This apparent snub has been keenly felt in the quadrangles of New Haven. Yale officials had hoped that the President might accept an invitation to speak at the university's tercentennial Alumni Leadership Convocation, a weekend of lectures, panel discussions, and parties, to be attended by a thousand or so of the school's most prominent graduates. But it looks as though he has found better things to do. Instead, the President's father, George H. W. Bush ('48), the former President, will be one of the event's featured speakers.

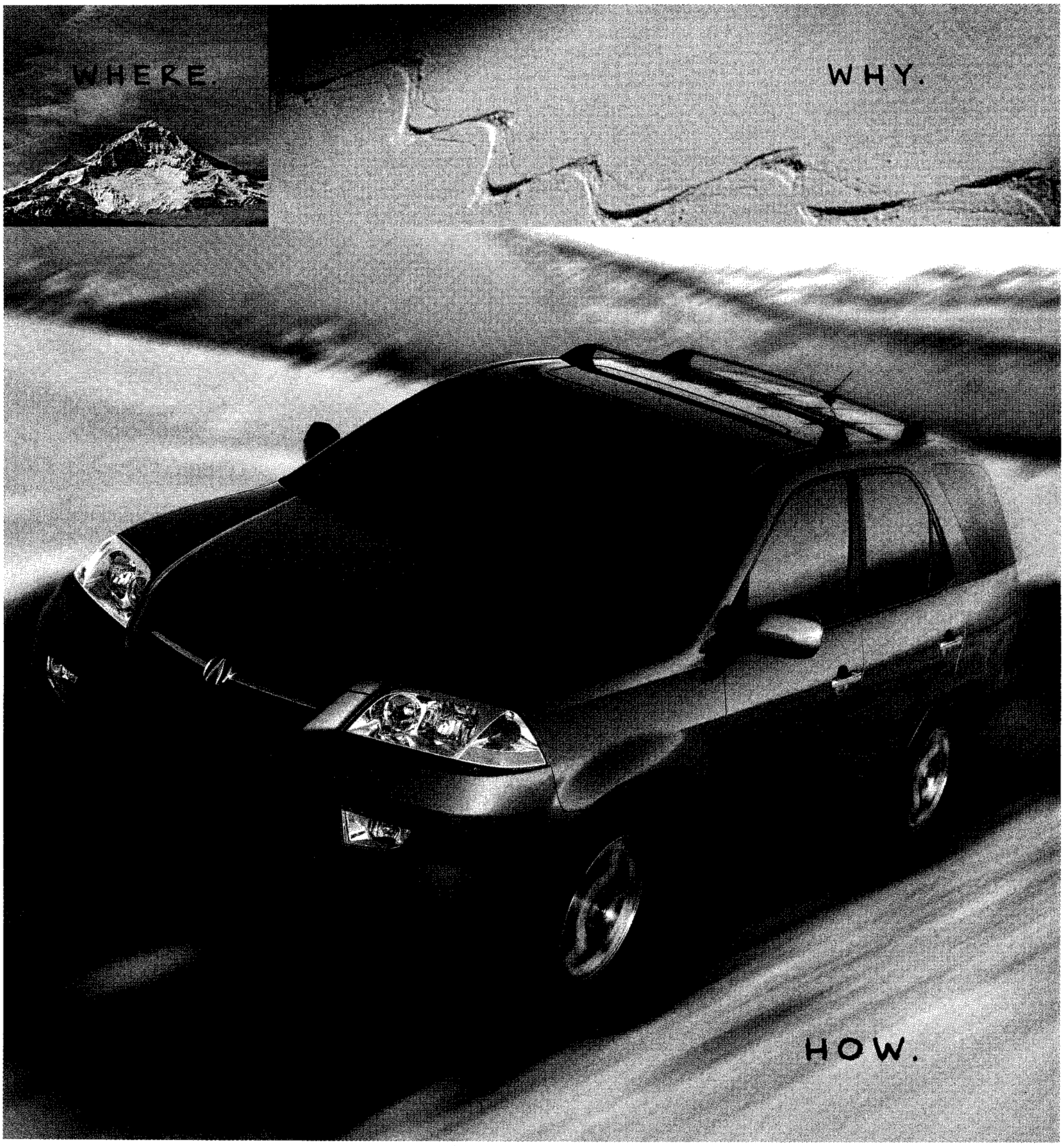
Inevitably, there has been some concern that Yale may be more excited about George W. Bush than George W. Bush is about Yale. According to one alumnus, Yale's president, Richard Levin, said that the school had extended numerous invitations to George W. to come up to Yale for various events, and that Bush had accepted none of them. ("I've got an ace in the hole," Levin supposedly joked at the time. "We've got his daughter"—a reference to the President's daughter Barbara, who is now a freshman at Yale.) Levin was travelling and was not able to comment.

For years, Bush seems to have had somewhat strained relations with the university, which festooned his forefathers with honors but sent him out into the world with a string of gentleman's C's. Still, the university has been reaching out to him lately. On the weekend he was inaugurated, Yale took out full-page advertisements in the Washington *Post* and the *International Herald Tribune*, congratulating him and touting his affiliation with the college (while noting that four of the last six Presidents held Yale degrees). When the *Chronicle of Higher Education* questioned whether Yale was trying to buy the President's good will, college administrators explained that, strictly speaking, the money wasn't theirs: the hundred-thousand-dollar advertising campaign had been underwritten by two alumni.

Bush's storied antipathy to Yale, which has been interpreted by some as an expression of populism, has become an integral part of his political packaging. By all accounts, he has never attended a Yale reunion or given a speech on campus. In 1991, his father received an honorary degree, but if one aim of that degree was to strengthen the bond between Yale and the Bush clan it seems to have backfired. Friends say that George W. thought Yale waited too long to honor his father. What's more, they say, the Bushes were offended by the ceremony because they believed that the documentary filmmaker Helen Whitney, who was the wife of Benno Schmidt, Jr., Yale's then president, kept her distance from them during the festivities. The Bush family interpreted this as some sort of political protest. (Whitney has denied it.) Still, Clay Johnson, a Yale classmate of George W.'s, who is now an assistant to the President, said, "The sentiments that the President had about Yale that were less than positive had everything to do with Yale's relations with his dad."

But Yale has not stopped trying. For the elder Bush's fiftieth reunion, in 1998, his portrait was hung in Commons, the central freshman dining hall. And last fall, when Laura Bush dropped young Barbara off to start her freshman year, Levin invited the future First Lady to stay with his family. She accepted. In January, when Levin visited Washington, the Bushes made Levin and his wife two of their first overnight guests in the White House. Moreover, one of the first social gatherings Bush held as President was a reunion of the brothers from his Yale secret society, Skull and Bones, according to talk among the Bonesmen.

Amid these signs of improved relations, the university still has hopes of luring George W. back before the tercentennial festivities end, in October. Or at least it did until three weeks ago. That's when the Class of 2001 announced its choice of Class Day



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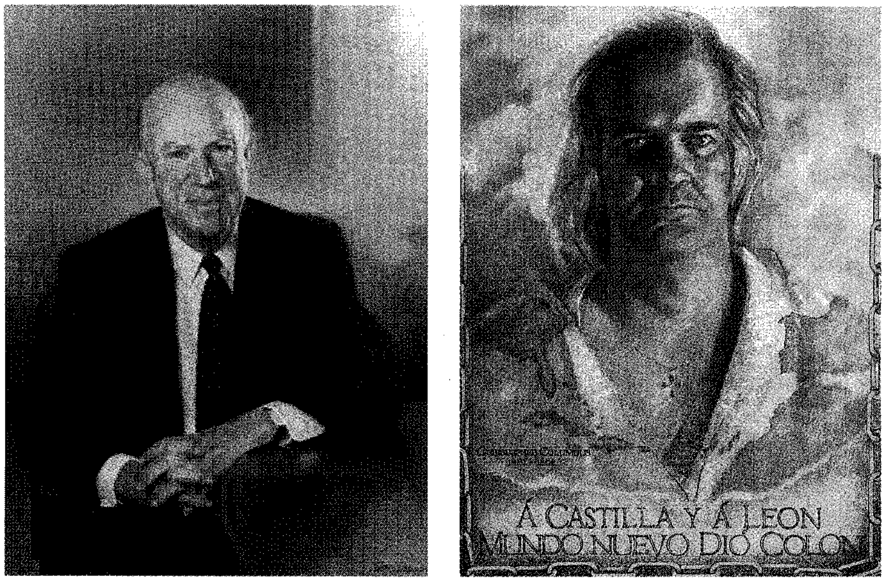
speaker: New York's junior senator, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Yale Law, '73.

—*Jane Mayer*

DEPT. OF DECENCY
THE MAN WHO MAKES THE MOGULS LOOK GOOD

John Howard Sanden is one of the most famous portraitists in the business. Among those he has painted are Laurence Tisch, Senator Robert Byrd, David Rockefeller, John Kluge, and the Reverend Billy Graham. He charges twenty-five thousand dollars for depicting his subject's head and shoulders (not including the hands), thirty-five thousand for a three-quarter-length portrait, forty-five thousand for the full-length treatment, and twenty-five thousand for each additional figure on the canvas. When he heard that Mayor Giuliani would be forming a "decency" panel to monitor the public funding of cultural institutions and the arts, he decided, as an artist and as a long-standing member of the Presbyterian Church, to volunteer.



Laurence Tisch painted by John Howard Sanden and Columbus by Constance Del Vecchio/Maltese, modelled on her husband, State Senator Serphin Maltese.

Sitting the other day in his small but elegant Carnegie Hall studio, Sanden, who has a square jaw and sandy hair, talked about his decision: "I told my son I'd be on the Mayor's panel and he said, 'What? Dad, that's a Nazi panel. You can't do that!' I said, 'Jonathan, there aren't going to be any Nazis on that panel. That's the furthest thing from the panel's mind.' "

Sanden's latest production, a portrait of Sanford Weill, the C.E.O. of Citigroup, and his wife, sat on an easel in the center of the room. In the picture, Weill looks as though he were thinking about something moderately funny, and he is wearing a tie patterned with little red umbrellas. His wife sits on a chair, wearing a collarless jacket covered in sequins. Sanden is proud of the sequins—"Only a few of them catch the light and sparkle"—as well as his new method of painting pinstripes, which involves adding them while the paint is still wet. "They have to be subtle," he said. "I used to only put in every other stripe, but then I realized that that's not being honest."

As for Weill, Sanden said, "He's a wonderful man, one of the nicest men I have ever met. And I thought he was going to be a holy terror. But that's what I've learned—that nice people rise to the top. Sanford Weill cares about exactly the same things you and I care about. He has a boat, he has a family. His No. 1 thing is certainly not banking."

Sanden had his first artistic experience in Mississippi, where his father was a Presbyterian minister. When Sanden was six, his father handed him a copy of "The Life of Abraham Lincoln in Photographs," and told him to copy all the images in the book. In the evenings, his father would assess his work, basing the critique, Sanden said, "on fidelity to detail—did I have the mole in the right place." Then Sanden tackled "The Life of Christ Visualized."

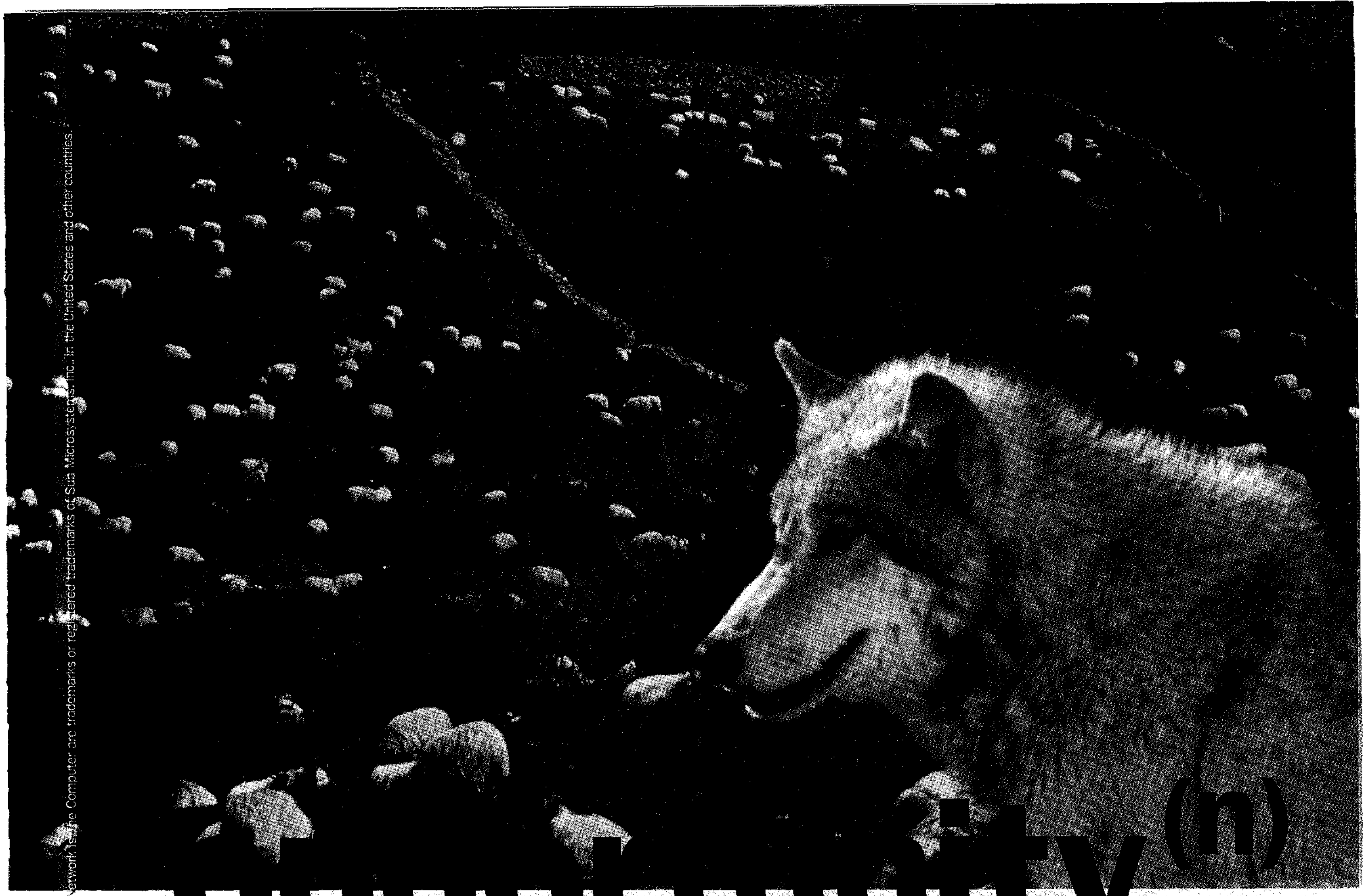
After four years at the Minneapolis School of Art, Sanden went to work for the Lutheran Church and the Seventh-Day Adventists, and he eventually became the art director for Billy Graham's ministries. Later, he did portraits from photographs of famous figures like Bob Hope and King Hussein for *Reader's Digest.*

Sanden says that the wealthy people he paints now are individuals of "extraordinary accomplishment." "Nobody says, 'I want to look powerful.' The C.E.O. says, 'I want to look approachable, I want to look amiable.' They don't ask for this, but I try to make them look urbane. Occasionally, with a man who has maybe gone through his whole life being shorter than he wished he was, you might instinctively give him a little more stature in the portrait. They never ask for it, but they kind of appreciate it."

Sanden is not the only person on the Mayor's Cultural Affairs Advisory Commission to specialize in the depiction of accomplished men. Constance Del Vecchio/Maltese, a sixty-eight-year-old woman from Queens, is best known for the paintings of great explorers she did for the five-hundredth anniversary of Christopher Columbus's discovery of America. Maltese based her images of Verrazano, da Gama, and others almost entirely on local Republican politicians and judges, including a portrait of Columbus modelled on her husband, State Senator Serphin Maltese.

Sanden believes that city-funded museums should be careful not to offend citizens, lest government funding disappear altogether. He admitted that he hasn't been to MOMA lately and cited as his favorite contemporary artists such portraitists as Raymond Kinstler, Bob Crofut, and Aaron Shikler. For years, Sanden regularly visited the Met to study Shikler's 1974 portrait of Robert Lehman, which hung outside the museum's Lehman wing (and which is now in deep storage).

Sanden appears to be somewhat tortured over not having been more tortured as an artist. "I'm at the point in life



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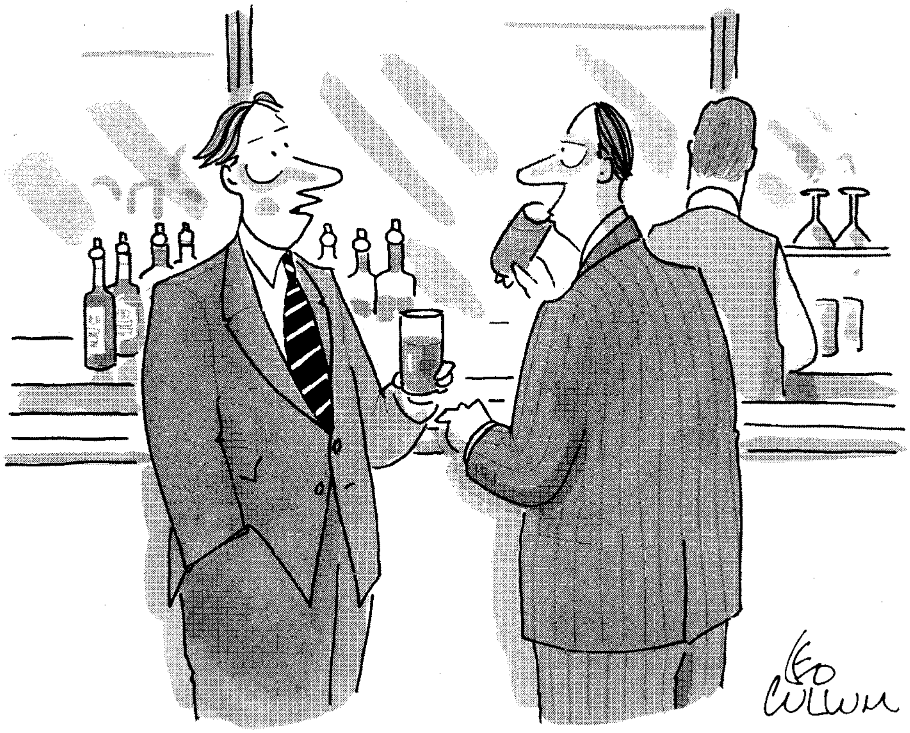


"I'd rather have had dot-com money and lost it than never to have been insanely wealthy at all."

• •

where, looking back, I see I took a wrong turn, maybe," he said. "I wish I could have been freer, taken a less controlled, conservative approach. But I have too many bills to pay to care about that now. My job is to discern what the subject's self-image is and give it to him. I don't think that's unworthy or pandering or flattering or anything else. I think that's a legitimate professional undertaking. Whether or not it's art—and you're thinking, This guy is on the Cultural Affairs Advisory Commission with *that* kind of attitude?—I'm not James Johnson Sweeney. I'm not an expert on aesthetics. Someone else will have to say if it's art."

—*Adam Lehner*

POSTSCRIPT
REMEMBERING POPS

The Pittsburgh Pirates' Hall of Fame slugger Willie Stargell died last week on the same day that the club dedicated its brand-new stadium, PNC Park, and fans on the way in for the team's opener, against the Reds, left flowers and notes at the base of a twelve-foot-high statue of him outside left field. The sculpture depicts Stargell at the plate with his bat cocked and his right shoulder bent menacingly forward—he batted lefty—but any of the passersby who were lucky enough to have seen him in action during the nineteen-seventies and early eighties could morph the bronze into an elegant fluidity, with the bat now rotating forward in his preliminary clockwise double crank-up and then reversing into a circular, uptilting swing that finished with his entire body lifting and opening like a stop-time peony, and the ball, quite often, distantly outbound. Stargell hit more dingers than anyone else in the seventies, two hundred and ninety-six out of a lifetime four hundred and seventy-five, but it was that swing that stayed with you, each time, after the noise and exclamations were done. A teammate of his, Phil Garner, who now manages the Tigers, recalled, "He had such a unique way of twirling that bat. When he was at his best, he would just nick the dirt"—with the bat tip—"and the dust would fly. . . . He had to get it just right."

Stargell had been ailing, with high blood pressure and kidney problems (he was sixty-one), and his checking out the way he did, neatly skipping the hype and platitudes of another sports dedication, felt typical. In 1971, after leading the National League in home runs, he batted a miserable and homerless .208 in the World Series, but showed no evidence of his distress or disappointment during the course of an otherwise memorable seven-game classic, which the Pirates eventually took from the Orioles. When a writer stopped by his locker after the sixth game to ask how such fortitude was possible, he gestured toward his four-year-old son, Wilver Stargell, Jr., who was playing on the floor nearby, and murmured, "There's a time in life when a man has to decide whether he's going to *be* a man."

Stuff like this gets noticed and sometimes rewarded, and by the time Stargell got into another World Series, in 1979, he was the captain and unifying main force of the rollicking "We Are Family" Pirates—a band of wildly popular, vividly disparate minorities, hard rocks, semi-castoffs, and exuberant kids who took their nickname from a great Sister Sledge single. Facing the same Orioles, they won another championship, again in the full seven, after trailing by three games to one. This time, Stargell came through with a dozen base hits, three homers, and the World Series Most Valuable Player award.

His teammates already knew his worth. Back on March 6th of that same year, in Bradenton, the Pirate outfielder Dave Parker had approached Stargell on the field and handed him a small golden baseball.

"What's this?" Stargell asked.

"Happy birthday," the Cobra said.

"Yes, but what is it?" Stargell said.

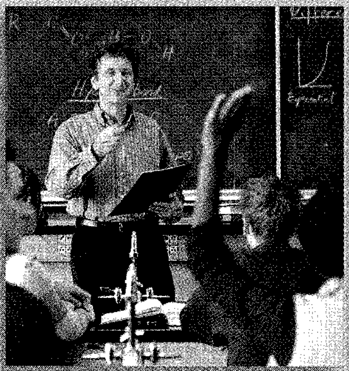
Only with reluctance, Parker confessed that he'd taken a pair of pliers to his own Gold Glove award, lately voted to him as one of the nine best defensive players of his league, and wrenched loose the prize.

"Oh, man, you shouldn't have done that!" Stargell cried.

"Couldn't of got it without you, Pops," Parker said, just before the hugs.

—*Roger Angell*

What did you want to do before you started doing what you're doing?



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THE FINANCIAL PAGE
MIND OVER MONEY

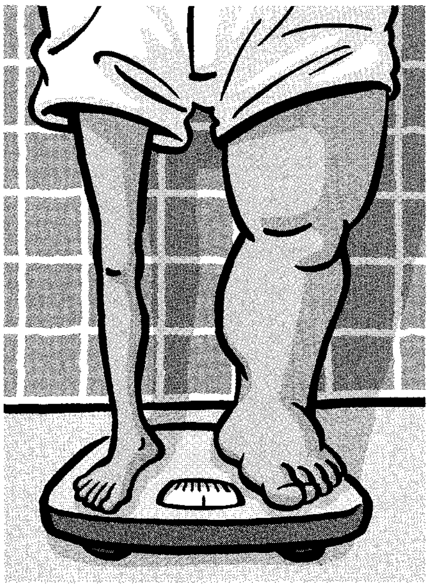
In the late nineteen-sixties, a psychologist named Walter Mischel devised an experiment to test the self-control of four-year-old children. A researcher would bring two treats—a big cookie and a little cookie, for instance—to a child alone in a room and give him a choice. If the kid wanted to, he could eat the little cookie right away. But if he waited until the researcher came back from an errand he could have both cookies. When the researcher left the room, a few of the kids asked for the little cookie right away, but most tried to resist the temptation. They did so by burying their heads in their hands, singing songs, shutting their eyes, inventing games, or trying to sleep. Most of them did not last long. But a few succeeded in distracting themselves and managed to hold out.

Most Americans are not four years old, but when it comes to spending and saving they act like they are. The successful kids in Mischel's experiment engaged in what economists call "mental accounting." They put the cookies in a theoretical account that they couldn't touch, then did their best to forget about them till the researcher returned. This happens to be the way most Americans manage their money. They put the cash that's piling up in their retirement accounts and stock portfolios into a separate, untouchable mental account. They live off the income and wall off the savings. This is more than a behavioral quirk. It's a key to understanding two crucial facts about the current economic slowdown: why, even as the stock market melts, consumers still spend money, and why the Bush tax cut, whatever its charms, has almost no bearing on whether they'll continue to do so.

You probably won't hear about mental accounting in Econ. 101. Economists have traditionally assumed that people treat every dollar the same way—whether it's owed to the bank, won in the lottery, or coming to them three years hence as part of an inheritance. But just look at what Americans actually do with their money.

They join Christmas Clubs. They give a bank money every month, earn little or no interest on it, and are not allowed to touch it until Christmastime. Effectively, they're paying the bank to keep them from spending their own money. This is not a bargain.

They also pile up record amounts of credit-card debt even as they put record amounts of money into 401(k) accounts. This is foolish, since the interest you pay on a credit card is usually higher than the return you'll get in the stock market. Rationally, it's better to have a thousand dollars in the bank and no credit-card debt than it is to have five thousand dollars in the bank and four thousand dollars in credit-card debt. But Americans generally don't think that way. Some money is for spending, some is for saving, and never the twain shall meet.



In this respect, Americans are like the farmers of the Luo tribe in Kenya. According to the anthropologist Parker Shipton, if a Luo sells land and uses the proceeds to buy cattle, the tribe assumes that the cattle will die. The money from the sale of land is called "bitter money" and cannot be used for certain purposes. Similarly, Americans tend to assume that if they dip into their savings to pay off their credit cards they'll end up with no savings and a pile of debt. Keeping their mental accounts rigidly separate is the only way that they manage to save anything.

"From a strictly economic perspective, this is, of course, insane," George Loewenstein, a professor of economics and psychology at Carnegie-Mellon, says. "But from the perspective of how people actually are, as opposed to how the textbooks describe them, there very well may be some rationality to this. People know they're not as motivated to save."

Once you take into account how people actually are, you see what's wrong with President Bush's stated rationale for his $1.2 trillion tax cut. The Administration is claiming that the tax cut is designed to get Americans to spend their way out of the slump. But the tax cut is backloaded, meaning that they won't reap most of the benefits for years. Nonetheless, its supporters insist that consumers will anticipate the future tax cuts and spend more now, giving the economy a restorative jolt.

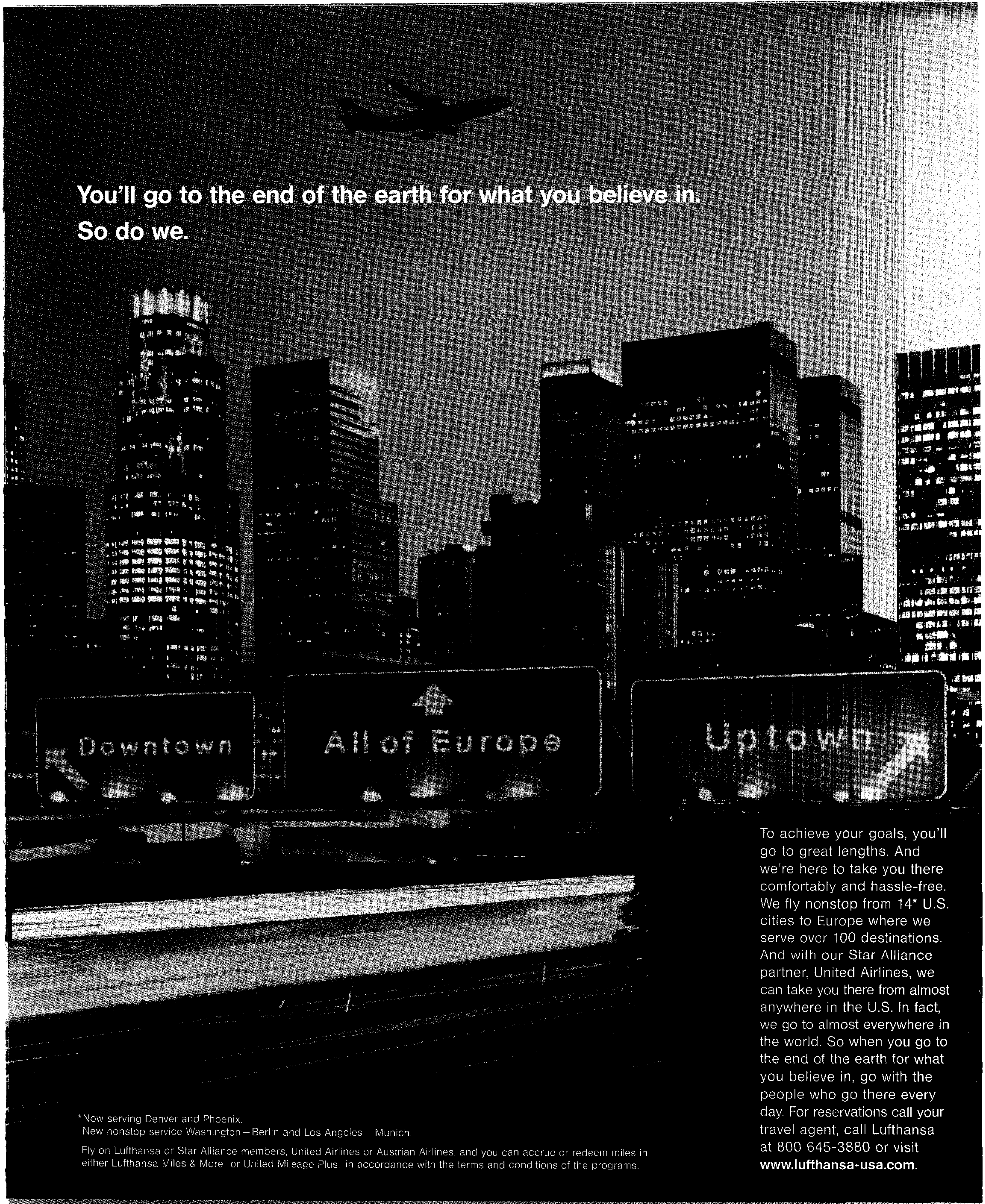
Not likely. Studies suggest that consumers don't spend future tax rebates until the money actually shows up in their paychecks. In their mental accounting ledger, the rebate goes under "Believe it when I see it."

Then again, even as stocks have been pummelled over the past year, consumers have continued to spend at a surprisingly healthy rate, particularly on cars and homes. For months now, commentators have been insisting that a "negative wealth effect" from the declining stock market would force consumers to cut back. Anecdotally, we hear about empty restaurants and starving butlers. But statistically we hear "Charge it, please."

This may seem surprising, what with all the rhetoric about how important the stock market has become to the economy. But we tend to forget a few things. Of the half of American households that own stock, most own very little. According to a Federal Reserve survey, the median stockholding family, as of 1998, had just twenty-five thousand dollars in its portfolio. The economist Edward Wolff estimates that ten per cent of the population owns seventy-nine per cent of all stock by value. More important, the majority of Americans own stock only in their retirement accounts, which are labelled, in their mental accounts, "Savings." That's why most people didn't change their spending habits radically on the way up or on the way down. As long as unemployment is low and wages are high, they're happy. It's the paycheck, not the Nasdaq, that keeps the Camrys flying off the lot.

—*James Surowiecki*

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN



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SHE HAD TO HAVE IT

The heiress, the fortune, and the forgery.

BY LOUIS MENAND

Except to readers of the "Guinness Book of World Records," in which she is ranked as the world's greatest miser, Hetty Howland Robinson Green is almost unknown today. But in her time she enjoyed the kind of fame that attaches to people who seem, somehow, to turn up on the crest of every wave. When she died, in 1916, the *Times*, which ran an obituary on the front page, called her "one of the most amazing characters, man or woman, that this country has produced." At the end of her life, she was called—and not without respect—the Witch of Wall Street. But she first became known, many decades earlier, for her role in a lawsuit over a fortune made in whaling.

Before people learned how to get oil out of the ground, they got it mainly out of whales, and the men who ran the business made a lot of money. In the decades preceding the Civil War, whaling was one of the most lucrative growth industries in America. Between 1815 and 1859, the value of the industry's total production rose by more than a thousand per cent. Slaughtering whales is an expensive and high-risk enterprise. Sailors mutiny and ships sink. Between 1820 and the start of the Civil War, eighty-eight whaling-ship captains out of a single port, New Bedford, Massachusetts, died at sea. Three of them were killed by Pacific islanders; ten were killed by whales. One, John Fisher, was last seen holding fast, like Ahab, to the side of a whale. But the profit from a successful voyage could be prodigious. Even after the industry had fully expanded, in the eighteen-forties, it was returning investors an annual average of almost fifteen per cent.

Half of all American whalers listed New Bedford as their home port. Their voyages were underwritten by local firms, known as "agencies," which raised the large amounts of capital needed to finance an expedition and took about a third of the profits in return. Two characteristics distinguished the principals in these New Bedford whaling firms: they were mostly Quakers, and they tended to intermarry. Quakerism conduced to thrift; intermarriage conduced to accumulation; and the consequence was that, by the eighteen-fifties, New Bedford was the wealthiest community, per capita, in Massachusetts, and one of the wealthiest in the United States. And the wealthiest agency in New Bedford was that of Isaac Howland, Jr. The fortune it amassed was the subject of the trial that was the public début of Hetty Green.

The Howlands came to America on the Mayflower. By the early nineteenth century, the family's success in a number of businesses had allowed it to put together the capital necessary to enter the whaling business. Isaac Howland, Jr. (a man who, history has found it important to record, weighed less than a hundred pounds), opened his agency in 1817, at the start of the whale-oil boom, and two years later he took in two partners: his son-in-law, whose name (such was the degree of intermarriage among whaling families) was Gideon Howland, and a local businessman, Thomas Mandell. In 1833, a third partner joined the firm, Edward Mott Robinson, a Quaker from Rhode Island. Robinson entered the trade in the customary manner: he mar-

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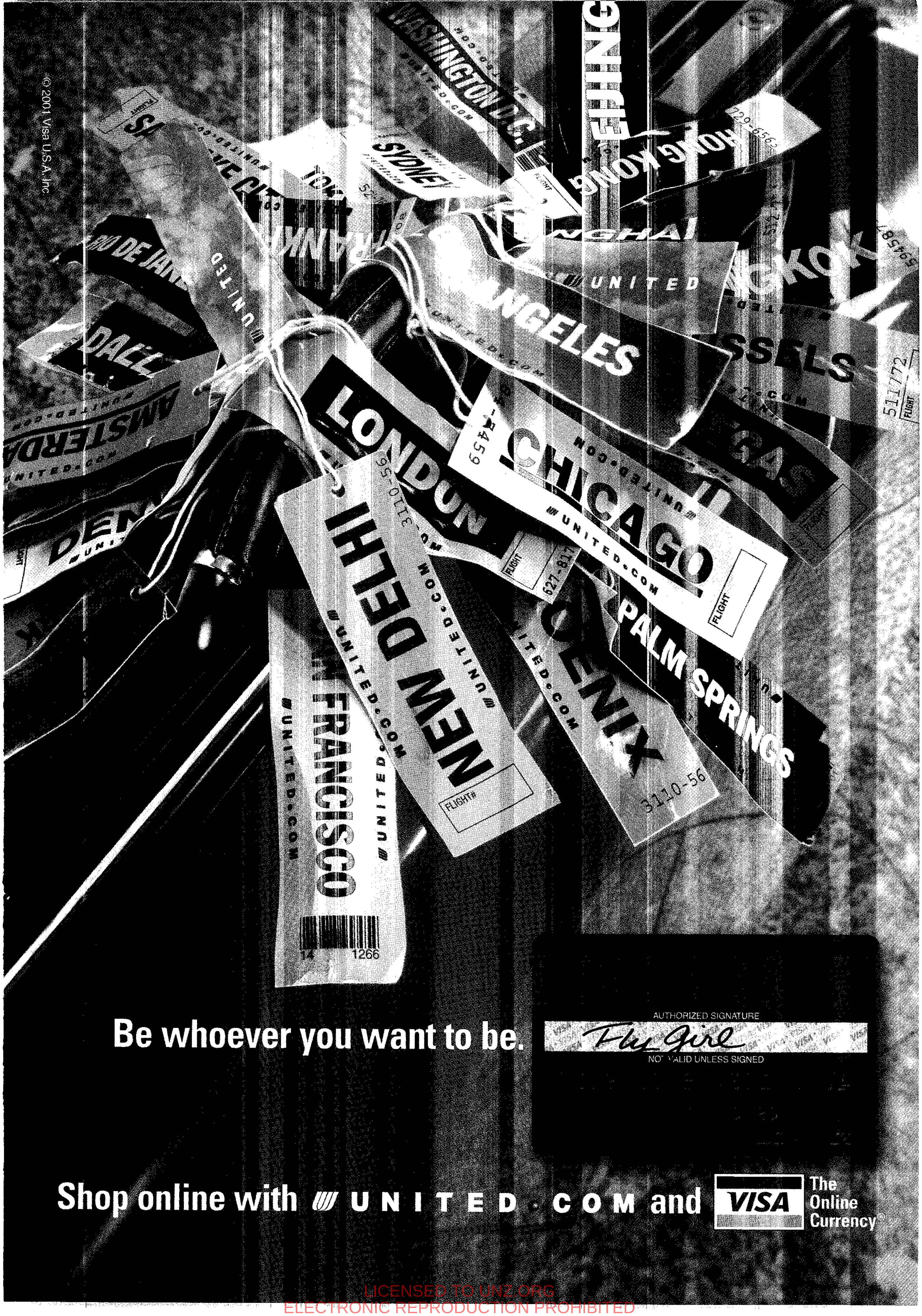
Hetty Green was among the greatest practitioners of finance capitalism who ever lived.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SOAK THE BROKER

ried Isaac Howland's granddaughter—Gideon Howland's daughter—Abby. Gideon Howland had another child, Sylvia Ann. She, too, eventually became a partner in the firm. In 1835, Edward and Abby Robinson had a daughter, Henrietta, called Hetty.

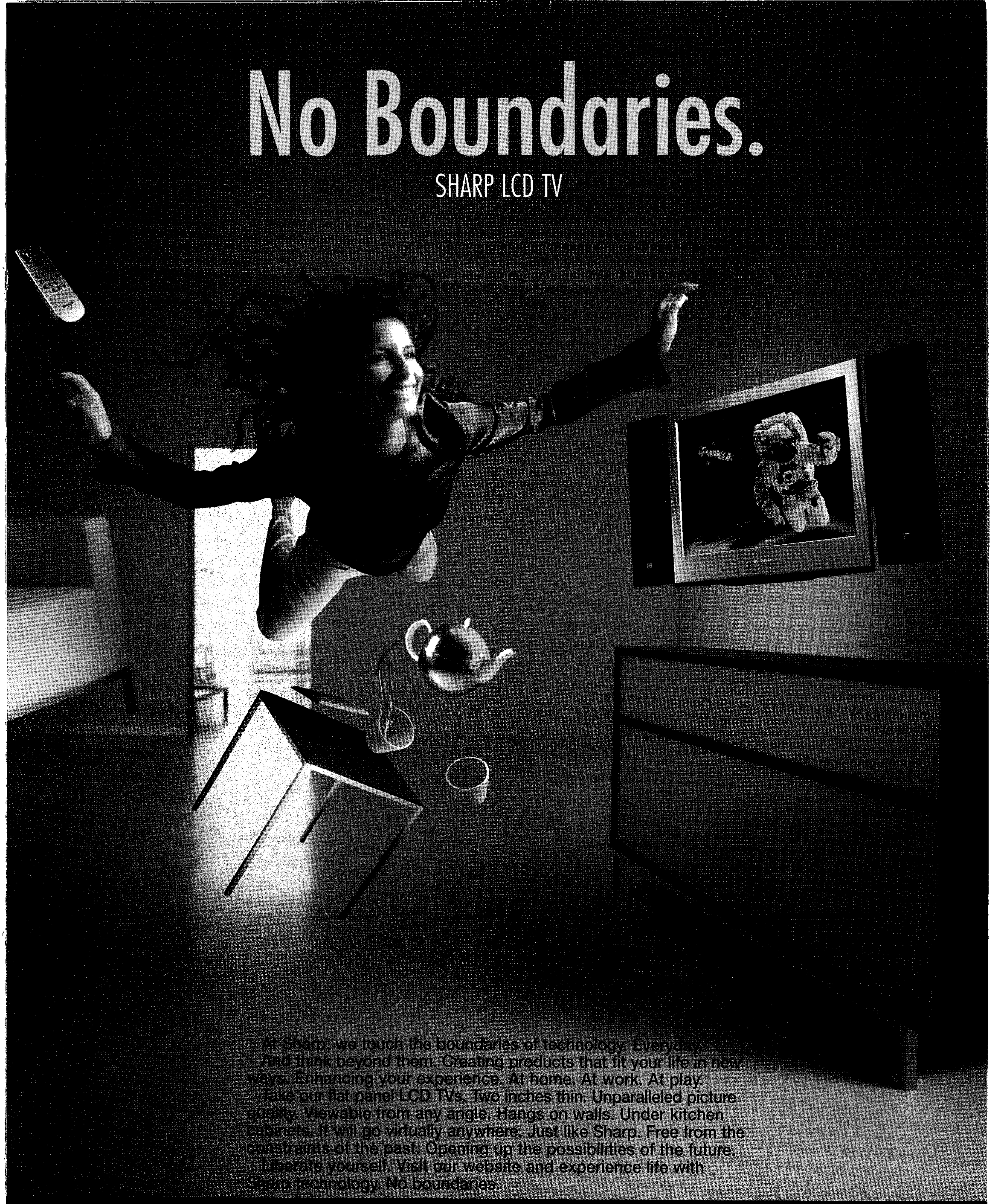
Isaac Howland, Jr., died in 1834; Gideon Howland died in 1847; Gideon's daughter Abby died in 1860. In 1861, Abby's widower, Edward Robinson, quit the whaling business and moved to New York City, where he joined a commercial shipping concern, and a year later the two remaining partners, Thomas Mandell and Sylvia Ann Howland, closed up shop. In forty-five years, the firm of Isaac Howland, Jr., had sponsored a hundred and seventy-one whaling expeditions, more than any other New Bedford agency except one in the whole of the nineteenth century.

Whether they were smart or just lucky, the Howland partners got out of the whaling business at exactly the right moment. Between 1860 and 1865, industry revenues fell by nearly fifty per cent, in part because the Confederates made Northern whaling ships a military target—they captured or sank forty-six of them during the war, mostly in the Pacific—and in part because the Union government bought forty vessels from whaling firms and sank them outside Charleston and Savannah in an unsuccessful attempt to blockade the harbors. Those eighty-six lost vessels represented about a third of the American fleet. But the chief reason for the demise of the whaling industry was the invention of the oil well. For centuries, people had harvested petroleum that seeped out of the ground or that collected on the surface of ponds, but when Edwin Drake dug the first modern well, in Titusville, Pennsylvania, in 1859, he revolutionized the oil business. The Civil War, by driving up demand, spurred the development of techniques for refining petroleum and kerosene, and when these became cheaper than whale oil investors began finding businesses besides whaling—for instance, railroads—to put their money into. After 1865, the whaling industry was kept alive only by the continuing demand for whalebone, a product used in the manufacture of corsets. It is poignant to think of sailors risking their lives in the extremely messy and dangerous business of killing whales just to keep the world in a decent supply of affordable corsets. In 1906, with the invention of cheaper flexible steel hoops, the whalebone market collapsed, and with it the American whaling industry.

Edward Robinson died on June 14, 1865, in New York City, leaving an estate worth almost six million dollars. Less than three weeks later, the last of the original Howland partners, Sylvia Ann Howland, died in New Bedford, at the age of fifty-nine. Her estate was worth $2,145,029; at the time of her death, she was said to have been the richest person in New Bedford. She had never married—she suffered from a spinal affliction, and was obliged to have herself carried around town on a litter—and her demise therefore left a single heir-at-law to the entire Howland fortune: her niece (Edward Robinson's daughter), Hetty Robinson.

Hetty Robinson was now thirty years old. She had been a belle in New York society, where she was known for her high color, her brilliant eyes, and her beautiful hair; but she had, as it happened, pretty much one interest in life. She had been left nine hundred and ten thousand dollars outright in her father's will, and the income from most of the remaining five million dollars in his estate. Sylvia Ann Howland's will, written in 1863, stipulated that roughly half of her money be given in bequests to various individuals and corporations and that the rest, $1,132,929, be placed in trust, with the income to go to Hetty during her lifetime and the principal to be distributed to the lineal descendants of Sylvia Ann's grandfather (also named Gideon Howland) after Hetty's death. The will named Thomas Mandell, the former Howland partner, as executor.

Hetty Robinson was therefore left with nearly a million dollars of her own, plus the income for life on some six million more. But she did not feel well used, so she sued. In December, 1865, she filed a bill of complaint in federal court against the executor and trustees of her aunt's estate, claiming the existence of an earlier will, according to which the entire estate, minus a hundred thousand dollars in unspecified bequests, should go to her outright. Hetty produced a copy of this earlier will, which had been signed on January 11, 1862, by Sylvia Ann Howland and three witnesses. She also produced two copies of an additional page to that document, which was signed only by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Sylvia Ann Howland, revoking "all wills made by me before or after this one." "I give this will to my niece," it said, "to shew, if absolutely necessary to have it, to appear against another will found after my death." This document became known, during the trial, as the "Second page."

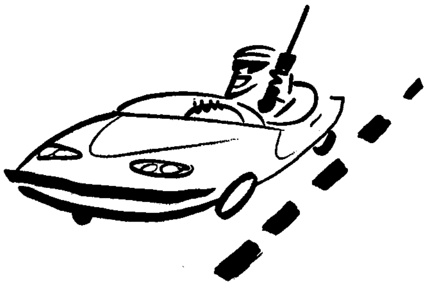
Hetty Robinson swore that she had personally drawn up the 1862 will, including the "Second page," at her aunt's request. She and her aunt had concealed the "Second page" from the witnesses, she explained, in order to keep a secret, which was that the will was one half of a "mutual will." Her aunt, Hetty told the court, had become estranged from her father, Edward Robinson, and wanted to make sure that none of the Howland fortune ended up in his hands. So she made Hetty promise to write a will of her own, excluding her father from receiving any money she might inherit; in return, Sylvia agreed to leave all her property, excepting a hundred thousand dollars in "presents to my friends and relations," to Hetty, with no strings attached. The two women agreed that neither would alter her will without notifying the other (this was the understanding memorialized on the "Second page"); and since Hetty Robinson had not, she claimed, been notified of her aunt's later will, dated 1863—the will in probate—that will must be invalid. Hetty was therefore asking the court to award her aunt's entire estate to herself. She would take care of the bequests, she said. She knew the beneficiaries her aunt had had in mind.

This was the burden of Robinson v. Mandell, or, as it became known, the Howland Will Case. The case attracted public interest for two reasons. One was the spectacle of the female heir to one of the greatest fortunes in the country fighting to gain control of every last penny—a spectacle heightened by her dramatic production of a secret document, and by the revelation that she had schemed with her aunt to disinherit her own father. The other was the parade of witnesses the parties engaged to testify. The Howland Will Case became the occasion for one of the great convocations of experts in mid-nineteenth-century America. And they were all summoned to address just one issue. For although the case presented a number of legal questions (whether courts should recognize "mutual wills," for example), the trial turned into a protracted battle over a single piece of evidence: the signatures on the "Second page." The defense claimed that those signatures had been forged.

An impressive array of legal talent was enlisted to litigate the matter. The estate's lawyers included a former member of Congress and a retired justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court; the lawyers for Hetty Robinson included Benjamin R. Curtis, who had resigned as associate justice of the United States Supreme Court out of disgust at the Dred Scott decision. The judge in the case, John H. Clifford, was a former governor of Massachusetts. Testimony was taken in camera before a master in chancery; it took more than a year to complete, and it yielded a thousand pages of evidence for submission to the United States Circuit Court.

There were three signatures in evidence: the one on the 1862 will, which had been witnessed by three people and which both sides agreed was genuine, and the signatures on the two copies of the "Second page," which the defense claimed were forgeries. Those signatures did look remarkably alike, and they also looked remarkably like the one on the will proper. They even appeared at the same place on the page—the same distance from the margins—as the witnessed signature. Had Hetty drawn up the "Second page" herself, without her aunt's knowledge, and then traced her aunt's signature at the bottom?

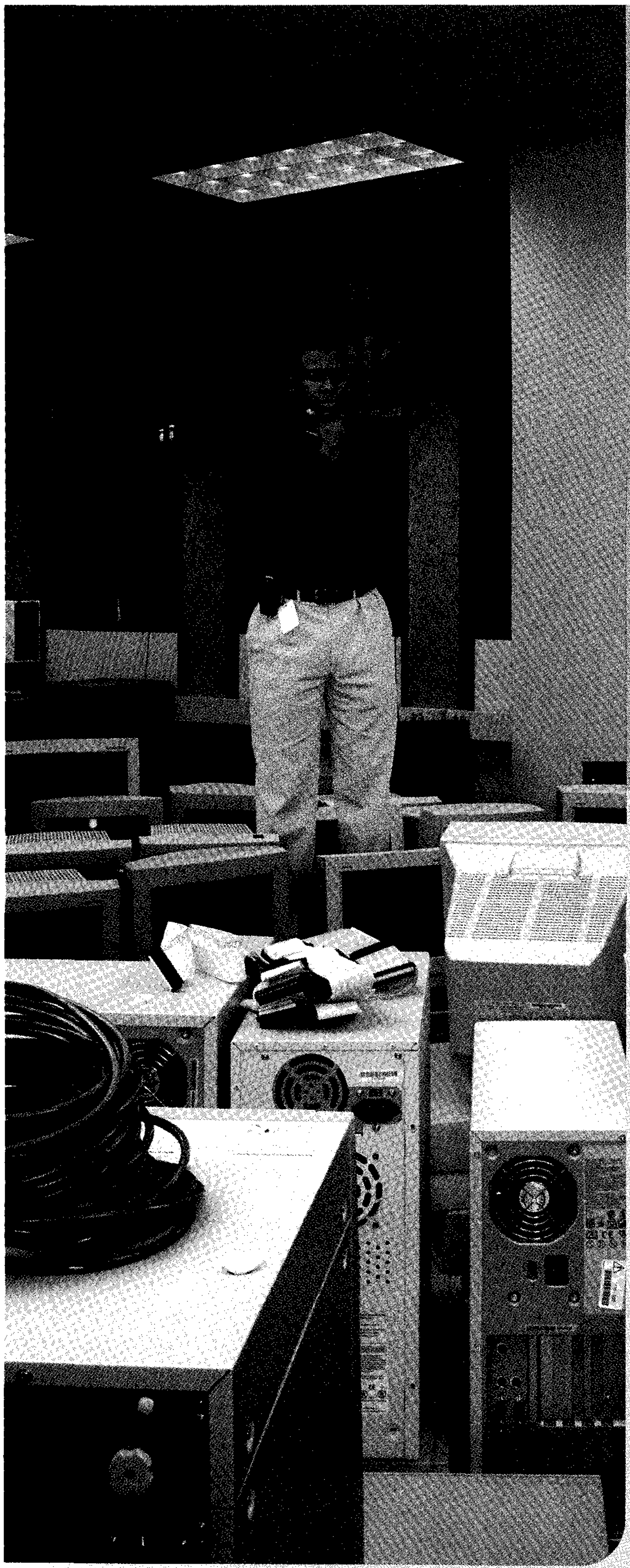
No expense was spared to settle this question. (Both sides had plenty of money, after all.) Chemists analyzed the ink and engravers evaluated the handwriting. Bankers and brokers were brought in from Boston and New York to offer testimony based on their extensive experience with signatures. The presidents of commercial colleges offered their views. It was an era in which penmanship was a professional skill. People made a living from handwriting.

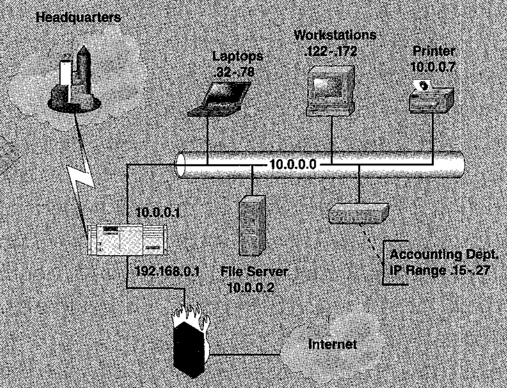


Hetty Robinson's lawyers produced a draftsman, two engravers, a teacher of penmanship, the principal of French's Commercial and Nautical College, and the chief of the electrotype and photographic division of the United States Coast Survey, the leading government scientific agency, along with many other witnesses who could claim to be experts in matters of signatures and copying. All duly swore that, in their informed opinion, the signatures on the "Second page" had indeed been written by Sylvia Ann Howland. There was no evidence that they had been traced.

Hetty's lawyers had a more spectacular witness to bring forward. This was John Quincy Adams, the grandson of the former President. Adams had found a hundred and ten returned checks in his grandfather's papers, which he handed over to an experienced engraver, one J. C. Crossman, who came up with twelve signatures that appeared to be virtually identical. These signatures were photographed, enlarged, and printed on both opaque and oiled (that is, transparent) sheets, so that they could be superimposed on each other and their remarkable similarity demonstrated. They were submitted to show that some people do duplicate their signatures with mechanical exactitude, as Sylvia Ann Howland appeared to have done.

The lawyers for the Howland estate scoffed at the demonstration. John Quincy Adams, they pointed out, was famous for the uniformity of his handwriting. The court was being asked to conclude that, because a legend of precision occasionally duplicated his signature, Sylvia Ann Howland, who evidently had been too infirm to have written anything in her life *except* her signature, could have done so as well. "Are not the improbabilities of a race horse, impossibilities for the draft horse?" they inquired. But Hetty's lawyers repeated the demonstration with the signatures of the president of the Suffolk National Bank, Samuel W. Swett. They had Crossman compare Swett's signatures on sixty-four checks, a procedure that yielded seventeen "covering" cases. These, too, were photographed, enlarged, and entered into evidence. The same exercise was performed with the signatures of the former treasurer of the Western Railroad, the clerk of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial

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Court, a former clerk to the governor of Massachusetts, and the superintendent of the Boston Lunatic Hospital. All exhibited instances of exceptional similarity.

Hetty Robinson's star expert witnesses were from Harvard: Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., and Louis Agassiz. Holmes is remembered today as a belletrist, the author, most famously, of the poem "Old Ironsides," protesting the breakup of the U.S.S. Constitution. But Holmes was a scientist by training. He was educated as a physician, and had once written a controversial paper on puerperal (or childbed) fever which is a landmark work in the germ theory of disease. He was on the faculty of the Harvard Medical School, where he had, for many years, been dean. He was introduced in court, therefore, not as a poet but as a person skilled in the use of the microscope. He testified that, after inspecting the signatures in question under a lens, he saw nothing to indicate that different inks had been used on the different documents, or that the signatures on the "Second page" had been traced.

Holmes's colleague Louis Agassiz was more expansive. Before the appearance of "On the Origin of Species," in 1859, Agassiz had been one of the world's leading naturalists. Among other accomplishments, he was a discoverer of the Ice Age. Agassiz was Swiss, and had come to Harvard in 1848, where he devoted his energy and considerable charm to building up its science programs. His greatest achievement there was the construction of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, which opened in 1861 and quickly became known as Agassiz's Museum. When he appeared to testify at the Howland Will trial, he had just returned from an eighteen-month scientific expedition to Brazil, which he had undertaken in order to disprove the theories of Charles Darwin. (He believed he had succeeded; few other scientists agreed.)

Agassiz treated the lawyers to a disquisition on the microscopic interactions of ink and paper fibre, which all parties claimed to have found fascinating. And he came to the same conclusion as his Harvard colleague: examined under a compound microscope, the fibres of the paper revealed no evidence of lead from a pencil (which might have been used to do the tracing), and the distribution of the ink did not suggest unusual movements of the hand when the signatures were written. There was no reason, he concluded, to believe that the signatures on the "Second page" had been forged.

The lawyers for the estate dismissed the testimony of Agassiz and Holmes as academic grandstanding. The witnesses had used microscopes a good deal, it was true, but they had never used them to analyze signatures. "When the instrument is arranged over a signature, the microscopist's work is done; and now who is entitled to give opinions as to the picture of *handwriting*? The whole human race can see what is to be seen," they complained. But the estate produced, in turn, its own battery of experts. These included Albert Sands Southworth, a pioneer of American photography who had also, as it happened, once been a teacher of penmanship; the presidents of the Metropolitan Bank of New York, the Webster National Bank, the American Bank Note Company of New York, and the Commercial College in Boston (a man who had testified about handwriting at more than two hundred trials); the assistant paymaster of the Suffolk National Bank; the treasurer of the City of New Bedford; the State Assayer of Massachusetts; and (a delightful coup) Joseph E. Paine, of Brooklyn, the person who had inscribed the Emancipation Proclamation. But to offset the testimony of Holmes and Agassiz the defendants needed their own giant of science from Harvard, and the man they selected was Benjamin Peirce.

Peirce (the name was English, and originally spelled Pers) was the Perkins Professor of Astronomy and Mathematics at Harvard and the superintendent of the United States Coast Survey, in Washington, D.C. He was the first internationally recognized mathematician the United States produced, and he cultivated a certain wizardliness of manner. His hair was iron-gray; he wore it long, with, in later years, a thick beard. And his obscurity was legendary. It was said at Harvard that you never realized how truly incapable you were of understanding a scientific matter until Professor Peirce had elucidated it for you. Even his most loyal students (their number was small) admitted that impenetrability was a large part of the appeal. Peirce enjoyed the reputation, and even played up to it. "Do you follow me?" he is supposed to have asked one of his advanced classes. No one did. "I'm not surprised," he said. "I know of only three persons who could."

Peirce brought one of his sons with him to the trial. This was Charles Sanders Peirce. Charles was a prodigy: he was twenty-eight years old in 1867, and already an accomplished mathematician, astronomer, and logician. He would become famous as the founder of semiotics, one of the leading figures in symbolic logic, and the inventor of the philosophical term "pragmatism." He is supposed to have been able to write with both hands simultaneously—a problem with the right hand and its solution with the left. He was also a philanderer, a drug addict (he took opium and, later, cocaine, to relieve the pain from chronic neuralgia), and an impossible person to work with. He eventually lost every job he got, and spent the last twenty-six years of his life in poverty. But he was one of the most brilliant scientific minds of the century.

The Peirces had devised an ingenious solution to the problem of determining the validity of the signatures in dispute. They identified thirty places in Sylvia Ann Howland's signature where, in order to form a letter, she made a downstroke with her pen. There were two such places on each letter "S," for example, two places on each "y," one place on each "l," and so on. When they superimposed the signature on the "Second page" over the signature on the will proper, the Peirces could see that the downstrokes coincided at all thirty places—that they started at exactly the same point on each letter. They set about calculating the likelihood that this had happened by chance.

It was a labor-intensive procedure. They collected forty-two of Sylvia Ann Howland's signatures and had them enlarged and printed on oiled paper, and then Charles superimposed each signature on the other forty-one, one at a time, and counted the number of downstrokes that coincided. This required eight hundred and sixty-one comparisons; since thirty separate downstroke "positions" had to be compared in each case, Charles had to tabulate the results of a total of 25,830 comparisons. (People who did this sort of work in the nineteenth century were not called "computers" for nothing.) He found 5,325 cases of coincidence—5,325 out of 25,830 possible cases in which the start of a downstroke in one signature coincided with the start of the same downstroke on the same letter in another signature. In other words, one out of every five of Sylvia Ann Howland's downstroke positions overlapped.

The probability of a series of events is the product of the probability of each event considered independently. The probability of getting heads when you flip a penny is 1/2; the probability of getting heads twice in a row is 1/2 times 1/2; the probability of three heads in a row is 1/2 times 1/2 times 1/2, or $(1/2)^3$. The probability of finding thirty coinciding downstrokes in any two of Sylvia Ann Howland's signatures was therefore a simple mathematical calculation, which Benjamin Peirce announced in his deposition. The chance that Sylvia Ann Howland could have unintentionally produced two signatures in which all thirty downstrokes coincided was, he said, one in 5^{30}, "or, more exactly, it is once in . . . two thousand six hundred and sixty-six millions of millions of millions of times, or 2,666,000,000,000,000,000,000." "So vast an improbability," he advised the court,

> is practically an impossibility. Such evanescent shadows of probability cannot belong to actual life. They are unimaginably less than those least things which the law cares not for. . . . Under a solemn sense of the responsibility involved in the assertion, I declare that the coincidence which has here occurred must have had its origin in an intention to produce it. . . . It is utterly repugnant to sound reason to attribute this coincidence to any cause but design.

He hadn't even bothered, he added, to factor in the likelihood of any two signatures' being exactly the same distance from the margins of the paper, as was the case with all three of the signatures in question. He estimated that, if he had, this would have increased the improbability of chance coincidence by at least a factor of ten, and probably by a factor of a hundred.

The lawyers for Hetty Robinson treated the whole demonstration as mathematical voodoo, and they had some fun during oral arguments, when the testimony was presented to the Circuit Court, ridiculing Benjamin Peirce's portentousness. "A most extraordinary piece of evidence drawn from the shades of the academy," Hetty's lead attorney, Sidney Bartlett, told the judges. "It is a pleasure to read it, may it please your Honors, to me, illustrating as it does the fervor and breadth with which science, only grant it its postulates, can express itself. Give it its postulates, and nothing can be more beautiful to read; but it is the most baseless statement that ever came from a learned man."

People who were not parties to the suit had a similar reaction. They didn't like the idea that something humanly possible to do could be declared statistically inconceivable; it was an inverse case of the irritation people feel when they are told that their behavior is statistically normal. It was as though some boundary had been transgressed, as though Sylvia Ann Howland had been denied the faculty of free will. "It is always a person's *intention* to make the signature similar to others as nearly as possible every time," complained a letter writer in *The Nation* shortly after the Peirces' testimony was presented in court. "The elements of will and desire unfit it for judgment by such laws. Figures can be prostituted to prove almost anything, and were it not for Prof. Peirce's high position, one might be led to think his evidence nothing more than a special plea. And the tone of his testimony is arrogant and positive, as if he were charging the judges."

Although we now use statistical calculations as the basis for decisions of all kinds—from predicting the weather to deciding when to change pitchers—there is still an instinctive resistance to the use of probabilistic arguments in a legal case. Why is this? Why, even today, does Holmes and Agassiz's testimony concerning ink traces and paper fibres seem plausible and probative, and the Peirces' calculations academic and speculative? It is probably for the same reason that the DNA evidence in the O. J. Simpson trial seemed to some people to be more easily discounted than the bloody glove: because the unique and concrete object seems more "real" than the laws of probability. People think, Well, if there is a one-in-a-billion chance that the killer was someone with the same DNA as O.J., we should give O.J. the benefit of

"Dr. Horton and I have discovered something we don't like. Our hope is that you, on the other hand, will grow to like it."

the doubt. Of course, one in a billion—in the case of the Howland signatures, one in more than a sextillion—is not a basis for reasonable doubt. The significance of the glove (as Simpson's lawyers successfully demonstrated) was actually a lot more ambiguous. But a statistical improbability, no matter how great, is not a literal impossibility, and the human mind is in love with the idea of beating the odds. In any case, the Peirces' testimony seems to have been one of the first applications of probability theory to legal evidence in history.

In the end, it didn't matter. In its verdict, handed down in 1868, the Circuit Court declared that Hetty Robinson's testimony on her own behalf had violated a federal statute prohibiting parties to a suit over a will from giving testimony unless called by the other side or ordered to testify by the court. Since Hetty was the only witness supporting the contention that her and her aunt's wills had been mutual, the Circuit Court argued, the contract was not proved. The court never reached the question of whether the signatures were genuine. The Howland Will Case was decided on a technicality.

The plaintiff had already skipped town. In 1867, while the trial was still under way, Hetty Robinson, now thirty-two, had married Edward Green, a wealthy Vermont businessman who had made his money trading in East Asia. Perhaps because she saw the shadow of a criminal-fraud charge across her path if the signatures in dispute were proved to be forgeries, she took the precaution of moving to London, where she and her husband lived for eight years, and where they had two children. No criminal charges were in fact forthcoming; Hetty Green's lawyers filed an appeal to the United States Supreme Court, but the case was settled before it could be heard. Hetty was left with the nine hundred thousand dollars she had inherited outright from her father, and the income for life from the rest of her father's and her aunt's estates.

She had failed to get her hands on the entire Howland fortune, but she put what she had to good use. She went into business as an investor, buying U.S. government bonds, sometimes for as little as forty cents on the dollar. Their price had been driven down during the period of economic uncertainty that followed the Civil War. She also purchased mortgages and railroad-company stock. She was essentially buying in at the bottom of what would become the fantastically expanding economy of the Gilded Age. She was a shrewd and unsentimental businesswoman—she is supposed to have required her husband to sign a prenuptial agreement absolving her of responsibility for his debts—and when she and her family returned to the United States she set up shop in lower Manhattan, where, by the end of the century, she had become an almost fabulous figure: the Witch of Wall Street.

Though the "Guinness Book of World Records" neglects to say so, Hetty Green did not get rich by saving. She got rich by investing. She owned railroads, banks, stocks and bonds, and real estate all across the country, but the greatest source of her income was money lending. Because so much of her money was in conservative instruments (including millions in cash), she was able to lend to investors and firms that had gone broke during the panic of 1907—and at high rates of interest. This is the source of her reputation as a witch, but it is also the reason for the respect with which she was treated by a paper like the *Times*. When others had gone under, she still had money to lend.

Hetty Green's reputation is an interesting cultural problem. "She lived on cold oatmeal," the "Guinness Book of World Records" says, "and left $95 million when she died." In fact, she did not live on cold oatmeal, and at the time of her death, in 1916, her worth was estimated at between one and two hundred million dollars. She was one of the greatest individual practitioners of the art of finance capitalism who ever lived. To give a measure of her accomplishment: J. Pierpont Morgan (also the heir of a wealthy man) was worth eighty million dollars when he died, in 1913. (John D. Rockefeller, the man who was to petroleum what Isaac Howland was to whale oil—he got into the business on the ground floor, in 1863—was by then worth nine hundred million.) Morgan ran a bank. Hetty Green owned and managed everything herself. Though she was an unforgiving businesswoman, there is no evidence that she ever set out to destroy anyone. Her reputation as a terrible miser, rather than a brilliant investor, is almost certainly owed in part to the fact that she was a woman.

She was eccentric and, unquestionably, stingy. She conducted her business in shabby clothes; she lived, most of the time, in a rented apartment in Hoboken. She hated to pay lawyers—she fired her own regularly—and she was known to try to pass herself off as indigent in order to get free medical care. There is a story, the details of which she disputed, that her reluctance to pay a doctor to attend to an injury to her son's leg led to its eventual amputation.

On the other hand, she was a New Bedford Quaker. Though she had gone through a glamorous period as a young woman in New York City, after her father's death she seems to have reverted to a kind of compulsive frugality. And, like many fantastically wealthy people—like, for instance, Howard Hughes—she was paranoid. She believed that both her father and her aunt had been poisoned, and that she was in danger of assassination herself. She avoided ostentation in part so that she would not be recognized and preyed upon. But she doted on her children, and they lived, with her approbation, in a style more suited to their means.

Hetty Green's estate was not entirely hers to dispose of. After her death, the portion of her wealth that derived from Sylvia Ann Howland's estate reverted, under the terms of her aunt's will, to the lineal descendants of Gideon Howland, who had died in 1823. By 1916, he had 1,478 living descendants. Four hundred and thirty-nine of them were determined to be legitimate heirs under the terms of the will.

Still, the bulk of Hetty's estate was her own—the fortune she had made from her father's legacy. In Quaker fashion, she left it all to her children. Her son had married, but by a prenuptial agreement his estate, on his death, reverted to his sister. Her name—she summed up, in effect, the history of her own fortune—was Sylvia Ann Howland Robinson Green. She had no children, and when she died, in 1951, she gave away a hundred million dollars. There were many beneficiaries. One of them was Wellesley College, whose administration building is named Green Hall, in fond memory of the Witch of Wall Street. ♦

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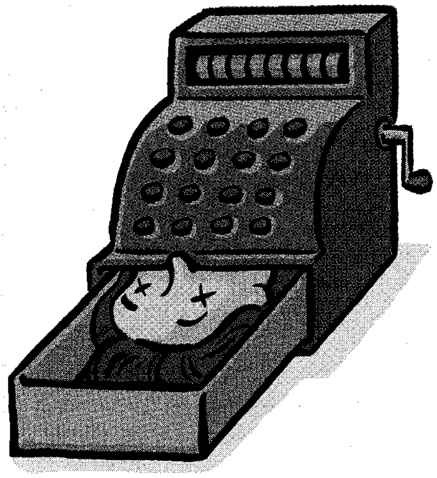


CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

I'll pass over the mini-jobs of adolescence—the summer-camp stints that were more like getting paid for having fun. I'll pass over, too, the self-created pin-money generators—the puppet shows put on for kids at office Christmas parties, the serigraph posters turned out on the Ping-Pong table—and turn to my first real job. By "real job," I mean one that had nothing to do with friends of my parents or parents of my friends but was obtained in the adult manner, by looking through the ads in newspapers and going in to be interviewed—one for which I was entirely unsuited, and that I wouldn't have done except for the money. I was surprised when I got it, underpaid while doing it, and frustrated in the performance of it, and these qualities have remained linked, for me, to the ominous word "job."

The year was 1962, the place was Toronto. It was summer, and I was faced with the necessity of earning the difference between my scholarship for the next year and what it would cost me to live. The job was in the coffee shop of a small hotel on Avenue Road; it is now in the process of being torn down, but at that time it was a clean, well-lighted place, with booths along one side and a counter—possibly marble—down the other. The booths were served by a waitressing pro who lipsticked outside the lines, and who thought I was a mutant. My job would be serving things at the counter—coffee I would pour, toast I would create from bread, milkshakes I would whip up in the obstetrical stainless-steel device provided. ("Easy as pie," I was told.) I would also be running the customers' money through the cash register—an opaque machine with buttons to be pushed, little drawers that shot in and out, and a neurotic system of locks.

I said I had never worked a cash register before. This delighted the manager, a plump, unctuous character out of some novel I hadn't yet read. He said the cash register, too, was easy as pie, and I would catch on to it in no time, as I was a smart girl with an M.A. He said I should go and get myself a white dress.

I didn't know what he meant by "white dress." I bought the first thing I could find on sale, a nylon afternoon number with daisies appliquéd onto the bodice. The waitress told me this would not do: I needed a dress like hers, a *uniform*. ("How dense can you be?" I overheard her saying.) I got the uniform, but I had to go through the first day in my nylon daisies.

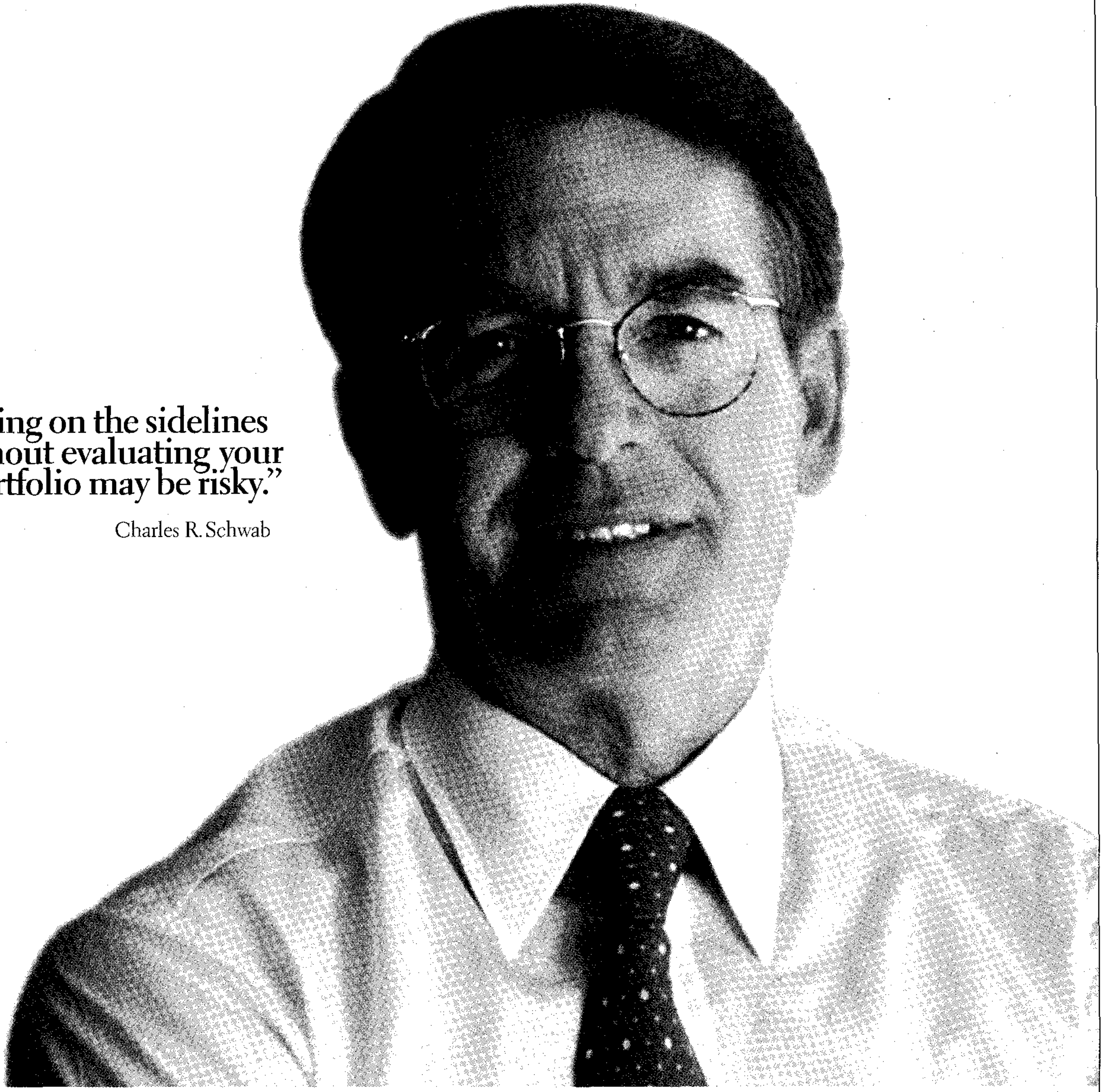
This first humiliation set the tone. The coffee was easy enough—I just had to keep the Bunn filled—and the milkshakes were possible; few people wanted them anyway. The sandwiches and deep-fried shrimp were made at the back: all I had to do was order them over the intercom and bin the leftovers.

But the cash register was perverse. Its drawers would pop open for no reason, or it would ring eerily when I swore I was nowhere near it; or it would lock itself shut, and the queue of customers waiting to pay would lengthen and scowl as I wrestled and sweated. I kept expecting to be fired for incompetence, but the manager chortled more than ever. Occasionally, he would bring some man in a suit to view me. "She's got an M.A.," he would say, in a proud but pitying voice, and the two of them would stare at me and shake their heads.

An ex-boyfriend discovered my place of employment, and would also come to stare and shake his head, ordering a single coffee, taking an hour to drink it, leaving me a sardonic nickel tip. The Greek short-order cook decided I would be the perfect up-front woman for the restaurant he wanted to open: he would marry me and do the cooking, I would speak English to the clientele and work—was he mad?—the cash register. He divulged his bank balance, and demanded to meet my father so the two of them could close the deal. When I declined, he took to phoning me over the intercom to whisper blandishments, and to plying me with deep-fried shrimp. A girl as scrawny as myself, he pointed out, was unlikely to get such a good offer again.

Then the Shriners hit town, took over the hotel, and began calling for buckets of ice, or for doctors because they'd had heart attacks: too much tricycle-riding in the hot sun was felling them in herds. I couldn't handle the responsibility, the cash register had betrayed me once too often, and the short-order cook was beginning to sing Frank Sinatra songs to me. I gave notice.

Only when I'd quit did the manager reveal his true stratagem: they'd wanted someone as inept as me because they suspected their real cashier of skimming the accounts, a procedure I was obviously too ignorant to ever figure out. "Too stunned," as the waitress put it. She was on the cashier's side, and had me fingered as a stoolie all along. ♦



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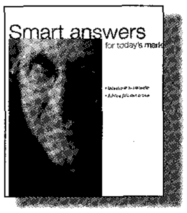

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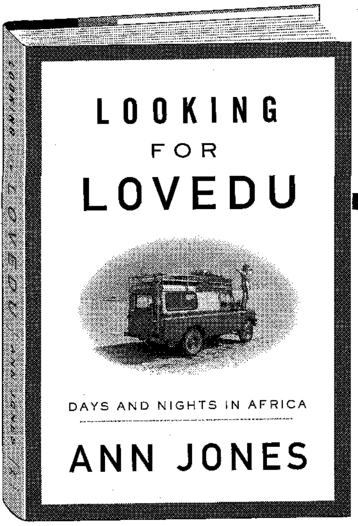

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LETTER FROM NEVADA

AMERICAN PIMP

How to make an honest living from the oldest profession.

BY REBECCA MEAD

Among the many distinctive characteristics of the state of Nevada is a strong commitment to the rights of cattle. If you happen to be driving on a Nevada highway and a cow steps into your path, totalling your vehicle and sending you to the hospital, it will be you who is liable to the rancher for the cost of his lost livestock. The open-range law is one of the customs of Nevada that exemplify the state's independent spirit, just as its fantastical casinos and drive-through wedding chapels are instances of a quirky dismissal of the rules and manners that prevail elsewhere in the United States.

Nevada has long been the place where Americans go to do things they can't do at home. Gambling was legalized in Nevada in 1869, only five years after the territory became a state. By 1910, merchants in Reno were catering to a divorce colony of rich Easterners who had come to live out the six-month residency period required for a divorce; in the nineteen-thirties, Nevada competed with the increasingly liberal divorce laws in other states by reducing the waiting period for getting "Reno-vated" to just six weeks.

The state's evolution as a family-values-free zone can be explained, historians say, by its origins as a mining state, populated largely by single men. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, there were three men for every woman, and a significant number of those women were using the gender disparity to their economic advantage. Nevada, unlike its neighbor Oregon, was not settled by small farmers agitating for moral reform; instead, it remained a saloon society, dominated by cowboys and hustlers. Its inhabitants realized a long time ago that handsome profits could be made by inviting the rest of America into those saloons.

Many residents of contemporary Nevada, particularly those who have moved there in recent years from less louche environs, are embarrassed by their state's historical investment in the nexus of cash and sin. Dennis Hof, of Carson City, however, aspires to update the tradition, and to apply modern marketing principles to the commodity in which he deals, which is sex. "Guys know what they think sex is worth," says Hof, who is the owner of the Moonlite Bunnyranch, one of about thirty legal brothels in Nevada. "But they don't know what it is worth to dress up in women's underwear."

Hof spent fifteen years in the real-estate business, developing time-share communities in San Diego, before buying the Bunnyranch nine years ago; he believes that the techniques of his former business can be profitably applied to the world's oldest profession. Indeed, he likes to say that prostitution is a kind of time-share business, since the property in question is being occupied for a short length of time rather than owned outright. As a real-estate entrepreneur, Hof used all sorts of ruses to lure potential customers to his developments. One favorite tactic was to go to an auto show, ask people to enter a competition to win a Rolls-Royce, call them a few weeks later to tell them that they were finalists, then have them come to a real-estate development and sit through a ninety-minute presentation on time-shares before a winner was announced.

Such sales techniques, Hof says, are the kind of thing he tries to teach his employees at the Bunnyranch—women like Air Force Amy, one of his top earners, who can bring in thirty or forty thousand dollars a month. Amy has been a legal prostitute in Nevada for ten years; she has white-blond hair and blue-white teeth and wears a D cup; she is thirty-five, though parts of her appear to be of more recent vintage. The genius of prostitutes like Amy, Hof explains, is to create the perception of value. "The younger prostitutes think it's all about the sex," Hof says. "Amy realizes it's about giving the guy a party, doing things that he wouldn't think of doing."

One man, for example, spent four

Dennis Hof with Barely Legal Mel, left, and some of his other independent contractors. Photograph by Fergus Greer.

thousand dollars for an evening's entertainment with Amy that included being required to whimper and bark like a mastiff, being paper-trained, and being made to crouch in a kennel. "At the millennium, sex is more about fantasy and role play than it is about penetration," Hof says. "We push that at the ranch. Our motto is 'Not Just Sex—An Adventure.' We want to create that adventure."

Dennis Hof likes to call himself America's Pimpmaster General. More precisely, what he likes is to tell people that Larry Flynt calls him America's Pimpmaster General, Flynt being a friend and mentor to Hof, and one whose name Hof, who is fifty-four, often finds it useful to invoke. Hof is a big, burly man—over six feet tall and two hundred and fifty pounds—with bright-blue eyes, sparse gray hair, a large grin, and a tanning-bed glow to his skin, which is startlingly even in color except for a couple of white creases on his ample neck. He dreams of turning his brothel, which he calls "the finest sexual establishment in the Western world," into the heart of a Bunnyranch empire. Inspired by the Hustler and Playboy brands, he imagines Bunnyclubs and Bunnyboutiques, Bunnyranch porno movies and porno magazines featuring Bunnyranch girls; and though none of these ventures are as yet very far off the ground, Hof exhibits the marketing man's conviction that promotion will eventually be followed by product.

To that end, Hof has engaged in all kinds of outlandish stunts, including hiring John Wayne Bobbitt to work as a driver and getting into a highly publicized spat with Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura, who was turned into an unwilling celebrity endorser of the ranch

"Unfortunately, my holding on to tech stocks was faith-based."

• •

after he made a reference in his autobiography to having visited it in his youth. "I'm the Colonel Parker of prostitution," Hof told me, not long after he had also told me that he was the Colonel Sanders of prostitution and not long before he announced that he was the Bill Gates of prostitution.

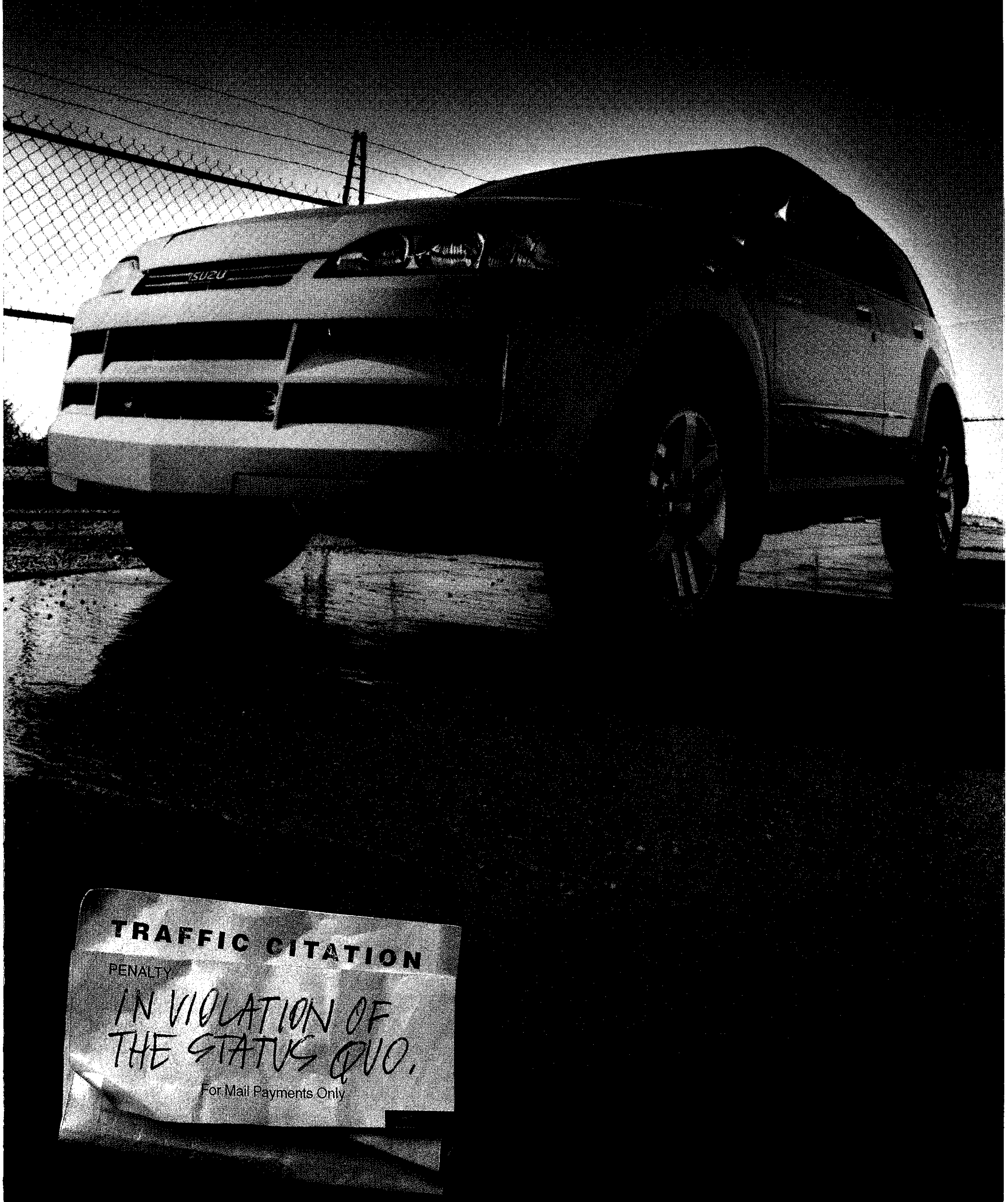
In order to visit the finest sexual establishment in the Western world, you fly to Reno and then drive to the eastern outskirts of Carson City (population fifty-two thousand), a dismal area zoned for commerce and industry. Just outside the city limits, you turn left onto a street that would easily be missed were it not for a sign adorned with lights, which reads, "Moonlight Road Commercial Business. Benny's Auto Painting. Tussey's Gun." You drive past the Jacob's Ladder Christian Day Care Center and the West Coast Shot factory, and pull into a driveway marked with a sign that reads, "Warning: Hot & Nasty Wild Sex 300 Yards Ahead." At the end of the driveway is an unprepossessing single-story white building, surrounded by a high chain-link fence and accessible only through a locked gate.

But for the fortifications, the Bunnyranch looks like the kind of prefabricated office space that might house a community health clinic or a Social Security claims office. Inside, it has the atmosphere of an insalubrious night club. The "parlor"—the room that patrons enter after being buzzed through the gate—is small and smoky, with black-painted ceilings, tinted mirrors on the wall, and the kind of black lighting that makes a white baby-doll T-shirt or a pair of fluorescent hot pants appear to glow. There's a gas-fuelled fake-log fireplace, an essential workplace provision when the staff wears next to nothing while sitting around waiting until the next customer opens the door, bringing in another gust of cold mountain air. At the back of the parlor is a bar, an A.T.M., and a men's room. Radiating from the parlor are two narrow corridors lined with doorways, each bearing the name—not the real name, of course—of its current occupant: "Miss Dynamite" or "Miss Tia" or "Miss Sinsation."

Brothels gained legal recognition in certain Nevada counties in the early nineteen-seventies, and were tolerated for decades before that. Until Dennis Hof rode into town, Nevada's most notorious brothel owner had been Joe Conforte, the owner of the Mustang Ranch, near Reno, who dominated the prostitution business from the nineteen-fifties until the early nineties. In the early days, Conforte would keep the trailer that housed his working girls at the intersection of three counties, wheeling it from one jurisdiction to the next whenever the respective local authorities threatened to turn up the heat on him. Extortion and tax evasion are some of the pursuits with which Conforte's name is associated, and since the early nineties he has been living in South America, out of the reach of the I.R.S., whose agents would still very much like to have a word with him.

When their owners are not evading taxes, brothels serve as a useful source of income for some of Nevada's rural counties, which can charge as much as seventy-two thousand dollars a year for a brothel license and also collect property taxes from the owners. The economic contribution of brothels is one of the reasons that support for them endures. George Flint, a retired minister and a lobbyist for the industry, offered another defense when I met him for coffee at the state legislative building in Carson City. "See that gentleman standing there—the tall one with the big, bulbous nose?" Flint asked, pointing at a man who turned out to be a representative from the A.A.R.P. "Where does he go to enjoy the sexual relationship of a pretty woman? Where does the gentleman who lost half his face in the Vietnam War go for sexual satisfaction? Where does the paraplegic go?"

Dennis Hof, however, does not emphasize the public-service aspect of the industry; instead, he sells prostitution as recreation. Just as Nevada's gaming industry has undergone a makeover, the corrupt casinos of old having been replaced by shiny family-entertainment emporia, Hof believes that the pros-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titution business is ripe for reinvention. "Adult entertainment isn't just sexual," he says. "I want to make the ranch fun for guys who don't even want sex. In another two years, it will be an adult Disneyland."

Hof's primary business innovation at the Bunnyranch has been to hire porn stars as prostitutes and to promote their presence as a Triple X Fantasy Camp, modelled on baseball fantasy camps that allow a bank manager to play on the same field with Cal Ripken, Jr. When a porn star agrees to work at the ranch for a spell, Hof also tries to arrange for her to appear on Howard Stern's show or in an adult magazine such as *Spectator*, thereby promoting her movies and his brand simultaneously. He is also attempting to turn his regular prostitutes into porn stars. The porn actor Ron Jeremy, a close friend of Hof's, recently directed a video featuring several of Hof's girls, "Lesbian Ho' Down at the Bunnyranch."

Among the porn stars who can sometimes be found at the ranch are Holly Landers, whose film credits include "Big Boob Bangeroo #14"; Annie Ander Sinn, billed as the tallest woman in porn (she is six-two and, not surprisingly, has twice been named Miss Nude Tall World International); and Bridget Powerz, otherwise known as Bridget the Midget, who is three-ten and whom Hof described to me as "a very prominent midget." Hof has developed promotional materials for his porn stars; each has her own flyer, which gives her vital statistics and describes her professional accomplishments ("Seen in over 700+ movies"). These flyers are mailed out to potential customers who call the ranch's toll-free number.

In order to develop his porn-star trade, Hof has loosened the lockdown rules by which most Nevada brothels operate. In past decades, brothels required girls to be in residence for three weeks at a time, to insure that a full-time staff was always available and that the girls did not abandon the safe-sex practices that the brothels enforce or make deals with customers on their own time. (The girls are supposed to split their earnings fifty-fifty with the house.) Instead of locking his prostitutes down, Hof allows them to fly in from Los Angeles or New York for a weekend or ten days. He maintains that his brothel has become the resort of choice for celebrities, including Gavin Rossdale from the band Bush, and Hof's close friend Joey Buttafuoco. (Both, however, insist that they have visited only the ranch's bar.) Just inside the Bunnyranch's main gate is a patch of concrete signposted "Helipad," but one of Hof's maintenance workers told me that she had never seen it used, and that the piece of ground was once the site of a septic tank.

"Porn star" is a somewhat loose appellation, one to which any girl who has ever appeared in an adult movie can lay claim. Air Force Amy, for example, boasts on her flyer that she has appeared in "too many XXX films to count," although she jokes that she can only count up to three. (Her flyer also makes the claim "Over 1,000,000 Sex Acts Sold.") Amy got her start in prostitution early, she explained to me one evening at the ranch. "My brother sold me for a half a pack of cigarettes when I was only ten, and it was on from there," she said. "I left home at an early age, and I started doing blow jobs in truck stops just to get around. Then I joined the military, and that made me realize that I could do anything I wanted to do." Amy says that she worked on an Air Force base, where her responsibilities included speaking to groups about anti-terrorism techniques. She says that her military experience has served her in her current line of work. "A lot of guys like me because they have been in the military themselves, and they think that if the military took me I can't be that bad," she said.

Amy has been working at the Bunnyranch for about a year, and, because she is among the most effective members of Hof's sales force, she has earned the right to work out of one of the very best of the Bunnyranch's three dozen bedrooms. Girls at the Bunnyranch work twelve-hour shifts, and there are anywhere from twelve to twenty girls on duty at any given time. Amy's room looks like something a bed-and-breakfast proprietor might advertise as a cozy retreat, except for the elaborate black leather bondage tackle that hangs on the back of the door. Most of the space is taken up by a double bed piled with a floral-print comforter and lots of throw pillows. Amy's work clothes—tight Lycra minidresses that she, like the other girls, buys from a travelling salesman who visits the ranch every few weeks—hang in a closet. Amy has her own bathroom, complete with a Jacuzzi tub, but most of the other girls must share bathrooms. (Bunnyranch prostitutes are instructed to tell customers who ask to use the Jacuzzi and the domination suites that they are "undergoing renovation.")

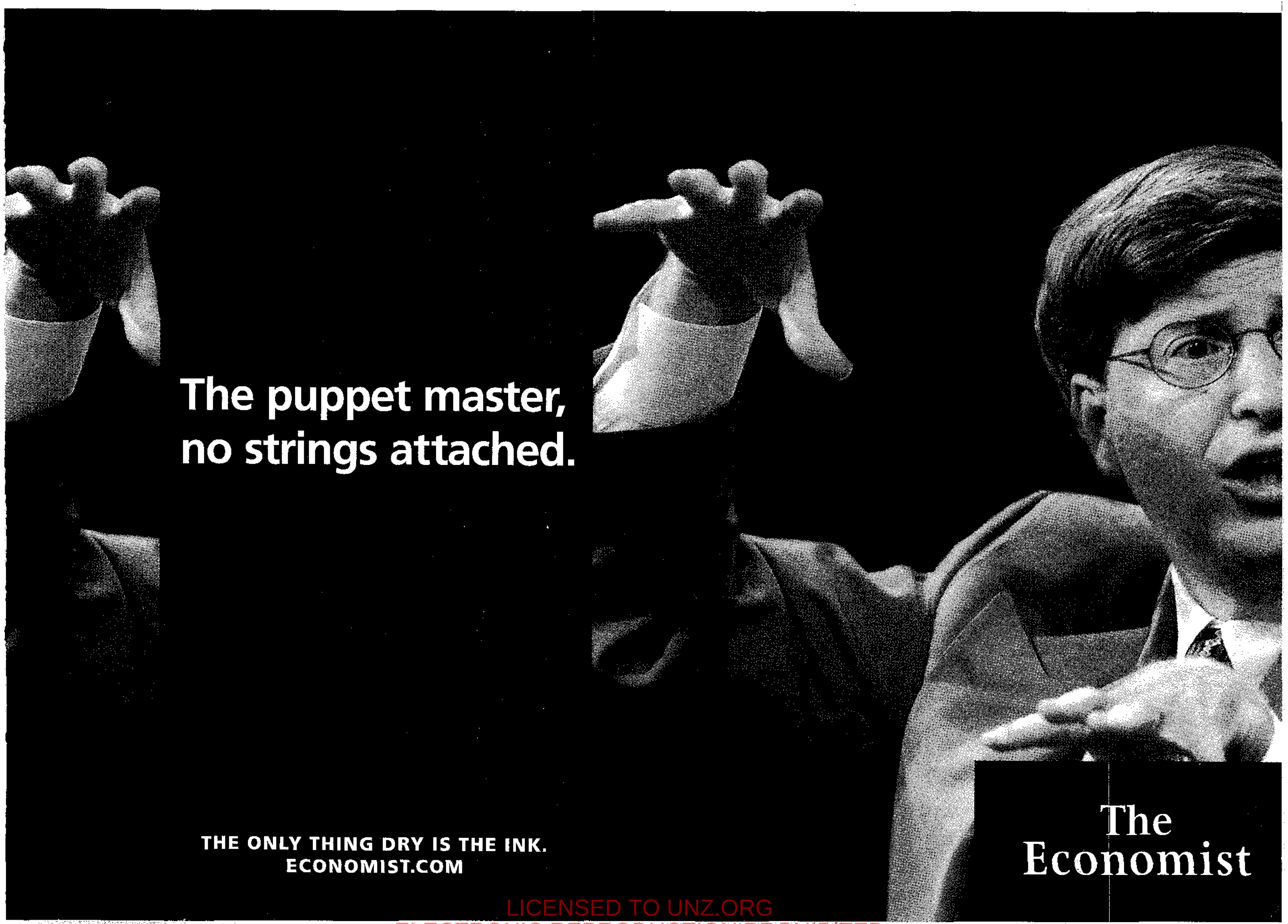
As Amy has become more experienced, she has refined her working methods. "I used to do a volume business, but I don't do a volume business anymore," she said. Instead of taking on several different clients for quick transactions, Amy would rather snare one customer for a long, elaborate engagement that might cost two or three thousand dollars. As a sales incentive, she often shows a potential customer Polaroids of previously satisfied clients, including one of an elderly man wearing only a dog collar, and a youngish, good-looking guy lounging in a bubble bath.

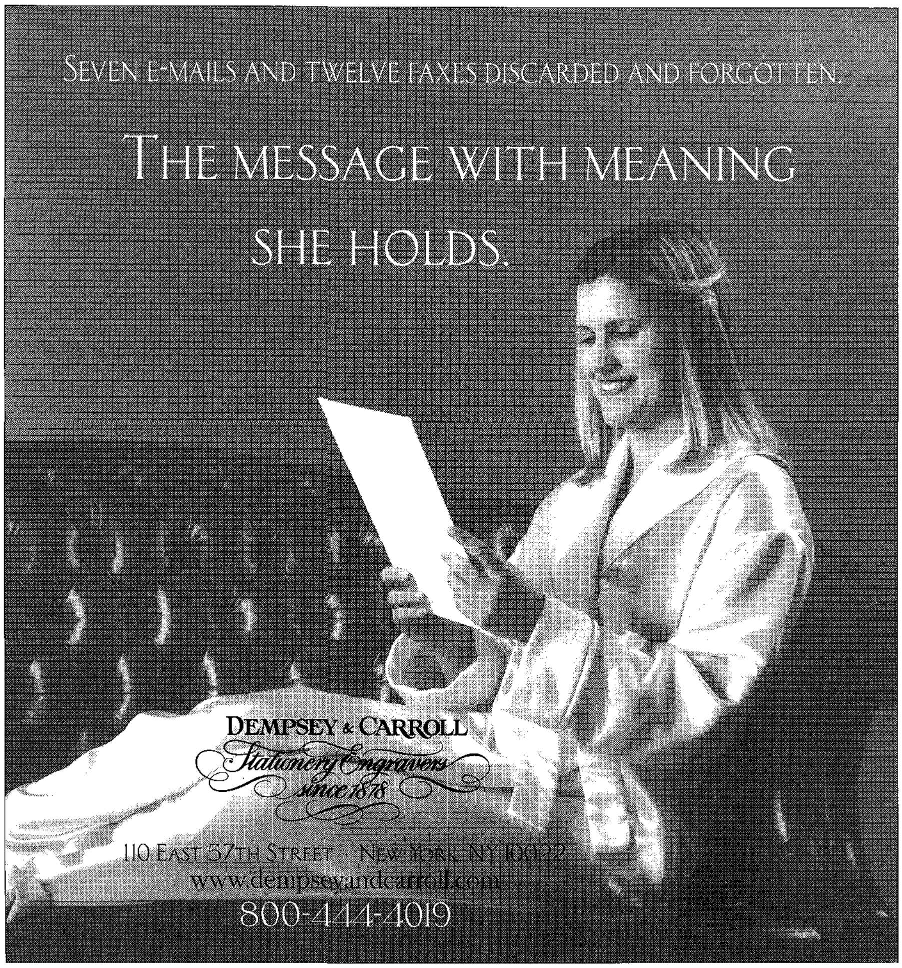
"A thousand bucks is a hell of a lot of money," she said. "But half of what you spend here has nothing to do with sex. It goes to the house for providing a nice, safe environment. No one here is going to take your wallet; the police aren't going to come and raid the place; your name is not going in the paper. I am not calling you in the morning saying, 'I thought you loved me, I think I'm pregnant.' " Amy smiled sweetly. "And I also tell them that they are not restricted to cash." The Bunnyranch accepts most major credit cards, discreetly billing its customers for a cash advance.

Like every adult-industry employer, Hof enjoys telling stories of girls who are putting themselves through college with prostitution—he says that three girls from Wellesley worked for him one summer—and, if higher education has not been a primary concern for most of the women in his brothel, it is true that Lyon County subjects them to strict regulation. Any girl who has been convicted of a felony in the past five years, or of a misdemeanor within the past year, is turned down. Sid Smith, the Lyon County sheriff, told me, "I could have an individual as a police officer who wouldn't qualify as a prostitute."

Because Hof cannot advertise effectively for prostitutes, he does considerable hands-on networking. I recently joined him and Air Force Amy in Tampa, where they were attending an adult-industry conference. We went from topless bar to nude club to what are known in the vernacular as "whack shacks"—small establishments, properly known as "lingerie shops," where men can pay to enjoy a one-on-one underwear-modelling session. Hof was scouting for potential employees—"How many cc's are those?" he asked one whack-shack girl about her breast implants. Everywhere we went, Hof handed out Bunnyranch business cards, urging likely recruits to call Madam Suzette, his business manager.

Suzette is a pretty, tough woman in her mid-forties, and she functions as Hof's chief operating officer. Although

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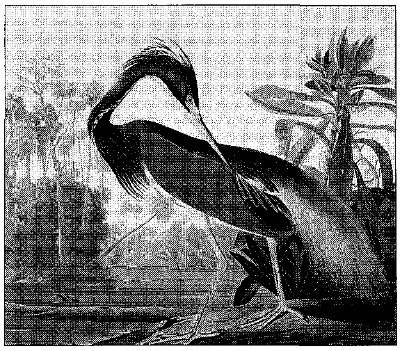
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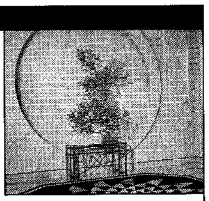
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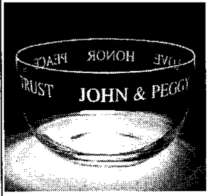

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many madams are former prostitutes, Suzette had no experience in the sex industry before joining Hof, and she appears to have a squeamish streak. Suzette was along for the Tampa trip, and she tut-tutted that these girls were showing things she'd never even shown her ex-husband during seventeen years of marriage. She said, "The only person who's seeing my snatch is the gynecologist."

Back in Carson City, most of Hof's employees are female; but there's a male bartender, male drivers, and two male cooks, who work in a small kitchen and dining room, just off the parlor. The prostitutes are provided with three hearty meals a day; I saw a cook slicing thick tranches of sirloin roast one day for the girls' supper, which they eat in the late afternoon, in order for their digestive systems to recover before the evening trade picks up. There is also a small salad bar. Snacks are available around the clock, and many Bunnyranch girls resort to them during their quieter hours; weight gain is a perennial ranch problem.

Madam Suzette's domain is the Bunnyranch office, the hub of the business operation, which is adjacent to the parlor. When I visited, the office was messy: notice boards were crammed with scrawled messages reminding the staff which girls wanted to be awakened when, and which girls needed the services of a driver to take them into town to shop. A black bra hung from a peg on the wall.

Any would-be Bunnyranch girl applies to Madam Suzette, who tries to weed out the street prostitutes and the drug users. New Bunnyranch girls fly to Reno, paying their own way, as do returning prostitutes; they are picked up at the airport by one of the ranch's drivers, who are known as runners. Hof's girls usually arrive in Carson City on Thursdays and, like all of Nevada's legal prostitutes, they are sent to a doctor to be tested for gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, and H.I.V.; thereafter, they are tested for gonorrhea and chlamydia once a week, and for syphilis and H.I.V. once a month. Girls talk about expiring—as in "I expire on Tuesdays"—to refer to the day when they must undergo their weekly checkup. Every Thursday, a doctor comes to the Bunnyranch and performs exams on the premises, for which the girls are charged out of their own pockets. Each new girl at the Bunnyranch is required to learn the house rules, which are enumerated in a thick black ring binder. Hof encourages the older employees to train the younger girls in negotiating, and he tries to impart some of his own sales wisdom to them, too.

"You have got to learn to box them and close them," he told me one afternoon. "It is really no different than a time-share sales team. Some girls are doing things for a hundred dollars that other girls are doing for a thousand. It is all about being able to create the value, and get the money out of them, and still have satisfied customers. It is not like you are trying to overcharge them; you are trying to upscale them."

Hof expects a certain degree of productivity from his workers: if a girl makes less than eight hundred dollars a night during the week, or less than a thousand on a Friday or Saturday, she is required to pay nineteen dollars for that day's room and board. Sometimes, Hof says, he finds it necessary to take a girl aside for a pep talk. "A lot of times, the girls aren't working for the money; they are working to have fun," he said. "That can be a problem for us. A girl can achieve her goals without the company achieving its goals."

It disappoints Hof to see that, for the most part, the girls lack professional drive. "The potential is there for them to make a quarter million, but most of them just make as much as they need," he told me. They don't save their earnings as assiduously as he would like, either; though their tendency toward profligacy does benefit Hof, who pays the girls daily in cash. "If we give the girls cash, they will spend it," he explained. "And if they spend it, they will make more. They *can* make more; it is just creating that desire to make it." One of Hof's favorite books is "How to Win Friends & Influence People," and he believes in Dale Carnegie's message of encouraging rather than browbeating one's employees into productivity. To motivate the girls, Hof gives gifts—photo frames or CD cases—to the top producers.

One day at the ranch, I sat in on a training session that Tia, a twenty-two-year-old Hawaiian prostitute whose hair hung down to her coccyx, was conducting with Joy, a very slender, pretty, somewhat vacant-looking twenty-two-year-old black woman from Los Angeles, who had been sent to the ranch by a porn photographer with whom Hof is friendly. Earlier in the day, Joy had been putting in some time in the parlor practicing her pole-dancing: grabbing the pole with her hands and twitching her buttocks with an impressive rapidity, all the while staring at herself in the mirror with the studiousness of a Juilliard student.

Joy had been at the brothel for a few days, so she knew how the lineup worked. When a customer arrives at the outer gate, the woman stationed at the brothel door presses a button that rings a bell throughout the Bunnyranch, sum-

Sometimes even an oracle can't predict the future.
THE ONLY THING DRY IS THE INK.
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The Economist

moning the girls to the parlor. They line up and are introduced by name to the customer, who is usually blinking and daunted at the sight of two dozen women dressed in G-strings and push-up bras, each smiling invitingly at him. The customer may choose a girl immediately, or he may dive past the lineup to the bar, where the girls will approach him one by one and ask to take him on a "tour," which involves going to a bedroom and trying to negotiate a price. When brothel-staff members arrive at the front gate, they push the buzzer twice, so the girls won't line up unnecessarily.

As they sat on Joy's bed, Tia explained the forbidden practice of "dirty hustling"—approaching a man at the bar when he is still speaking to another prostitute, or acting lewdly during the lineup by exposing a nipple. She said that the girls were forbidden to discuss their boyfriends or their kids while sitting in the parlor, in case a customer should overhear. She informed Joy that she was responsible for buying her own condoms, which she must use with every sex act. Food was free, but Tia explained that all the girls had to pay the ranch's maids to do their personal laundry, the runners for driving them into town, and for any time they spend on the house tanning-bed, which costs four dollars for twenty minutes. There were other recommended expenditures, too: Joy needed to buy an adult movie, and to have it playing at all times on the TV (which was affixed to her wall, as in a hospital room), and she was advised to buy some sex toys. They were on sale in a glass cabinet by the bar: among other novelty items was a ten-dollar "pecker leash," a small leather contraption that an innocent mind might imagine using to take a hamster for a walk.

Joy looked shocked when Tia suggested an accountant. "People pay taxes here?" she asked. Prostitutes are independent contractors, and each girl sets her own price. Prices at the Bunnyranch might start at one or two hundred dollars (for manual relief), rise to five hundred for a half-and-half (half oral, half intercourse), and can go into four figures for "fantasy parties" involving such specialties as bondage or parties involving more than one girl. Hof tells of one customer, known as Food Dude, who comes to the ranch loaded down with Twinkies and Ring Dings and other confectioneries, engages the services of a couple of girls, and takes over the guest trailer for an extended erotic food fight, for which, Hof says, he pays twenty thousand dollars or more.

THE HOBOS

One boy says he is going back home to sleep in a real bed.

The other boy sits down on the dirty ballast and strokes
a matchbox with one finger, flicking a stick of yellow flame
into the weeds. A red dog is crouched beside him with six feet
of knotted clothesline tied around its neck. The night-time smells
like creosote and shirtless boys, mixed with june bugs and grease.

Earlier, they had met a man who was building a fire in a tin can;
he was scratching himself all over and telling a joke about chickens.
The boys got afraid of the laughing man with the pin-head scabs;
they became scared of getting their legs cut off and loneliness.

But still the second boy says: *I swear I'll jump the very next train and you
might never see me again!* The first boy looks back: *Yo pants
is on fire*—and keeps on walking. The first boy is a baby-faced black boy
with big arms. The other boy is skinny as a rail and sings like the rain.

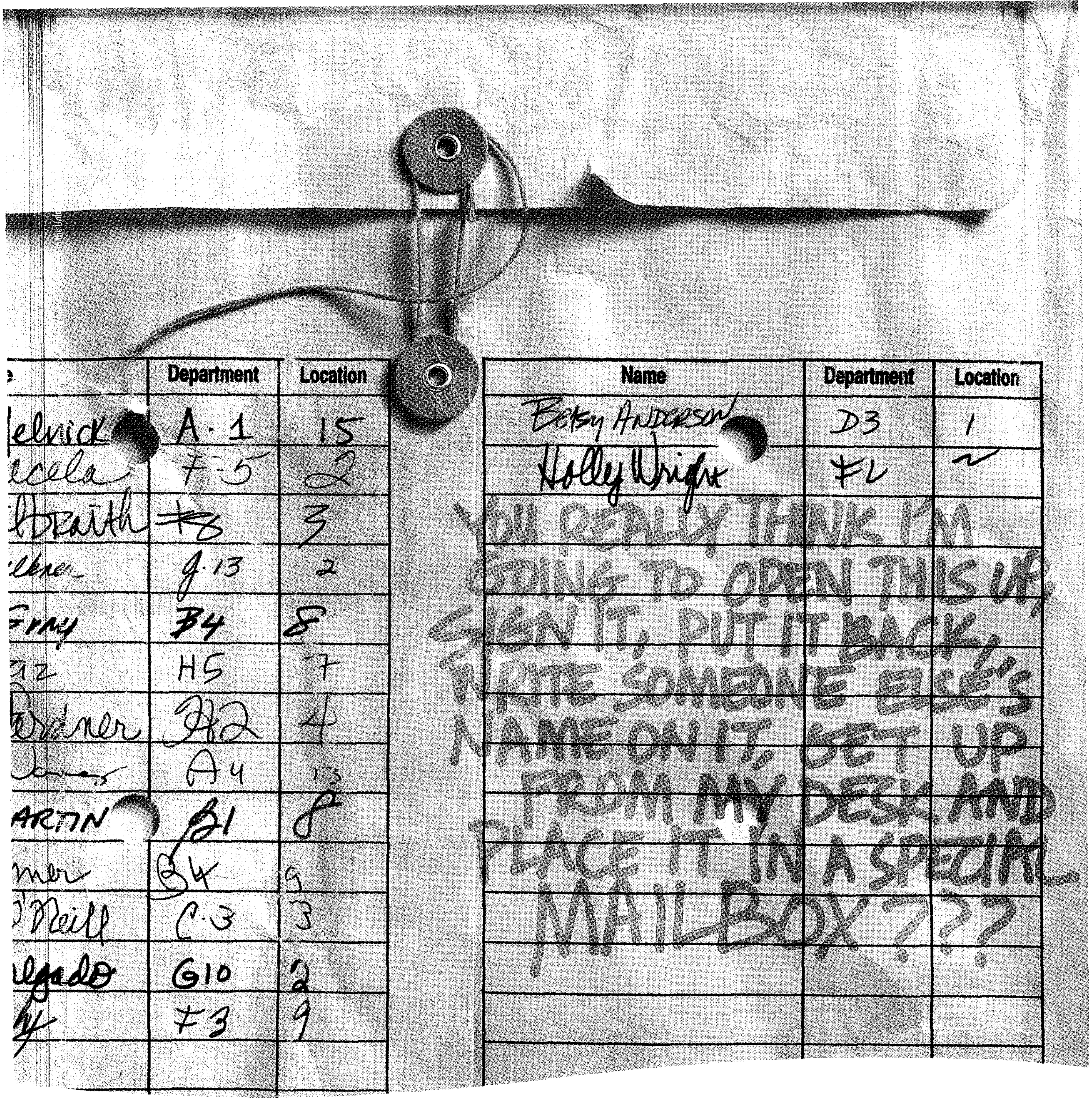
—*Maurice Manning*

Tia advised Joy not to spend more than fifteen or twenty minutes on a negotiation; if she didn't close the deal, she was to bring the customer back to the bar. "Never escort a customer to the door. Escort him to the bar," Tia said. If Joy did come to terms with a customer, she should conduct a "dick check" to insure that he has no visible signs of disease. "Make sure you do the dick check before he pays," Tia said; that way, Joy wouldn't have to give a refund if she found any intimate ailment.

One night, I sat in the office with Glenda, the night-shift manager. She is in her sixties, with jet-black hair that she wears in a tumbling, curly style, and she looked businesslike yet feminine in black heels, narrow black pants, and a white blouse with a decorative frill at her ample, jutting bosom. It wasn't a particularly busy night: there were long lulls between customers. Most of the customers were sheepish men in their twenties to forties, usually in groups, their edges somewhat blurred by alcohol and their conversation-making abilities apparently compromised by the unusual surroundings. One man asked Annie Ander Sinn if she was "really that tall." Annie replied, "No, it's an optical illusion." Another customer was asked to leave after repeatedly grabbing Barely Legal Mel's barely covered buttocks as she walked past the bar. There were no female customers that evening, although they do sometimes come in, either with men or alone. Traditionally, women have been barred from Nevada's brothels—it was always assumed that they were looking for their errant husbands—but Hof views couples as a new market segment he is trying to open up. Glenda does not approve. "I think it should be like a gentlemen's club," she told me, sniffily.

At intervals, Megan, a nineteen-year-old maid who was working the front door, came to the office and announced that one of the girls was on tour. When a girl went on tour, Glenda would press a button on a primitive intercom and listen, with half an ear, to the negotiations taking place in her room. A primary function of miking the girls' rooms is to prevent them from telling the customer one price and reporting a lower price to the office. To an untrained ear, the negotiations were largely inaudible, with only occasional phrases in male voices—"Well, what do I get for three hundred?" and "I've never done this before"—emerging through the static.

Every time a girl conducted a suc-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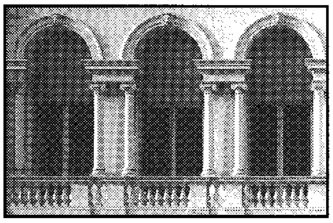

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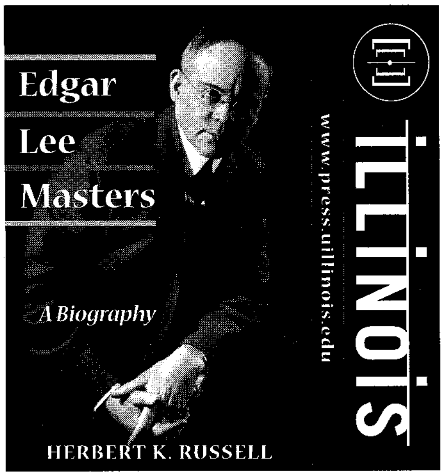

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Dorothy and Simon - July 17, 2000

cessful tour, she returned to the office with her client so that Glenda could fill out the paperwork. Each girl has a card, rather like an oversized library card or a punch-clock card, which is kept in a rack on the wall. When a girl brings her customer to the office door, Glenda removes her card from the rack and writes down the amount of money that the customer has agreed to pay, then takes his cash or credit card. The girl discreetly tells Glenda how much time she intends to give the customer—say, twenty minutes for three hundred dollars—and Glenda writes that down, too. After Glenda has filled out the card, the girl initials it, and Glenda hands her a clean "party sheet," which she will place on top of the bedspread in her room, all transactions being conducted on the bed, not in it. (Changing a full set of sheets is too time-consuming.)

When the girl leaves the office, Glenda places her filled-out card face down on a counter and takes one of about a dozen small kitchen timers that are kept in the office, sets it to go off after the agreed-upon number of minutes, and places the timer on top of the card. If the girl is still in her room when the timer rings, Glenda will pick up the intercom and say, "Time to re-party." Re-partying means that if the customer wants the session to continue, a new fee must be negotiated. I asked Glenda what happened if the customer had not finished in the prearranged time. She formed a loose fist with her right hand and gestured up and down briskly, saying, "They finish themselves off."

Hof lives in a handsome new house fifteen minutes from the ranch, nestled in the foothills of the mountains and overlooking a lake. There are stables for twenty-one horses, although Hof has only nine; there are garages for his vehicles, which he says include four Mercedes-Benzes, a BMW, a Jaguar, two four-wheel-drives, four motorcycles, and two boats. Inside, there are oatmeal-colored thick-pile carpets, marble bathrooms, and a brushed-steel kitchen. Hof says that he has spent two million dollars on the place and will spend another million before it is completed. Above the fireplace in the living room hangs a gaudy painting of a nineteenth-century New Orleans bordello.

This year, Hof expects the Bunnyranch to gross seven million dollars, and last year, he says, it grossed six million. To make such an amount, the ranch would have needed to bring in an average of sixteen thousand four hundred dollars a day, and, although I did not see revenues of that sort during my stay, I was not there when Food Dude was in the house. Hof encourages his employees to think strategically about their careers, and he believes that a girl should come to the ranch for the shortest possible amount of time, make as much money as she can, and get out to spend time with her children or on the beach or making porn films or doing whatever else she pleases. "These girls are my friends, and they are my business partners," he said. "I want everyone's experience at the Bunnyranch to better their lives." A number of the prostitutes told me that Hof was helping them build careers outside the ranch. Amy, for example, said that he was encouraging her to attend school to become a Realtor.

Hof likes his girls to think of him as a father figure—albeit a "Who's your daddy?" kind of father figure, since he disregards the conventional wisdom that it is ill-advised for brothel owners to mix business with pleasure. In the few days that I was in Hof's company, he spent the night—or, in one case, the afternoon—with at least five different girls, including Barely Legal Mel, a skinny nineteen-year-old whom Hof fondly refers to as "a pedophile's dream." In his house, there is a "girlfriend room" near the master bedroom, to prevent feminine clutter in his own domain. Hof is divorced, and has two daughters in their thirties, from whom he is estranged. He is bitter about his marital history. "I ended up getting a girl pregnant, ended up getting married, ending up having a second child—all because I wanted to have sex," he said.

I met one of Hof's former girlfriends, a twenty-one-year-old woman named Krystyn Konrad, who now works at the Bunnyranch. They'd lived together for a year, and remain on good terms. Hof has porn-star ambitions for Krystyn, who has bottle-blond hair, an hourglass figure, and slightly crooked teeth; she has appeared in *Hustler*, and he would like her to make movies. "She could do television," he said. "I could take her on Howard Stern, and she could become a national name overnight." Hof is clearly still fond of Krystyn. "If I thought I wouldn't run into the emotional baggage, I would think about getting back together with her, because I like the look of her, and I love having sex with her," he told me.

Krystyn has a less sentimental view of things. One day, as she and Hof and I were driving around in his car, Krystyn explained that her job often required her to be an actress, and that maintaining a relationship while working as a prostitute was difficult. "It is very hard for me to enjoy sex in my personal life," she said.

"It's hard for you to enjoy sex in your personal life?" Hof asked, puzzled.

"It's kind of a chore," she went on. "I enjoy the hugging and the intimacy part, but as far as the actual sex, there really hasn't been that many men I can stay in that intimacy role with. It's kind of like, 'O.K., get off, so that we can go to bed.' "

"I think we have a very good sex life," Hof said, sounding hurt.

"You and I do," Krystyn said quickly. "But that's because I love you."

There was silence in the car. Then Hof fixed me in the rearview mirror and said, "She doesn't have any trouble having sex with me."

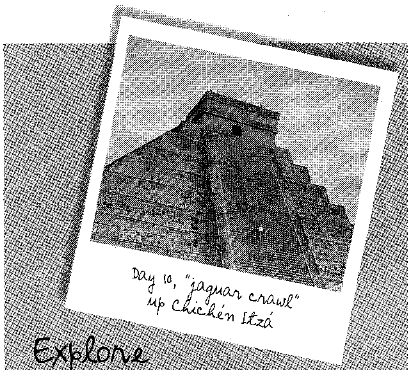
"I am a big part of the sex industry in America," Hof told me one day. "I am one of the most high-profile people in America. I am right there with Hefner and Guccione and Flynt. Who else is there?" We were in Los Angeles, driving to a casino owned by Larry Flynt. It is not quite true that Hof has the name recognition of those other sex-industry players—when, one evening, we met half a dozen of Hof's friends at Spago, it turned out that his personal assistant had, for expediency's sake, used the name of Hof's onetime friend Al Goldstein when making the reservation—but his aspirations are as large as his appetites. Hof was eager to show Flynt a mockup of a magazine that he intended to produce, called *Bordello Confidential.* It was to feature pictures of Hof's girls, and he hoped that Flynt could be persuaded to become his partner.

We met Flynt for lunch at the restaurant of his casino. Flynt has been paralyzed from the waist down since an assassination attempt in 1978, and his wheelchair was rolled up to the head of a long table. In front of him was a plate of eggs; a linen napkin was tucked under his chin, and his attentive wife, Liz, sat to his right. Hof greeted the Flynts effusively, then sat down, ordered some sushi, and brought out what was to be the first *Bordello Confidential* cover. It showed a girl named Mila, Queen of Nasty, in a provocative rear view.

Flynt eyed the cover. "There could be a good market for this if it's good quality," he said. "There are over a hundred adult titles out there, but only four

THE PERFECT HERESY

"We could move to Brooklyn, or we could live in a tent."



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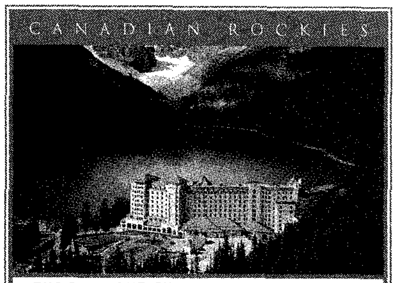

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or five that are of any quality." When Hof suggested that Flynt might want to get involved, Flynt looked dubious. "We wouldn't be able to do that much for you," he said. "You could advertise on our Web site."

"Or put it under the *Hustler* flagship, if it works out right," Hof said, undeterred. Not long afterward, Flynt excused himself and rolled away to join a poker game, and Hof and I took a tour of the casino. It was a huge, gleaming, lofty palace: the Beverly Hills Hotel to Hof's Motel 6. "Beautiful, isn't it?" Hof said admiringly. We walked over to the poker table, where Flynt, surrounded by high rollers, was gambling serious money. Hof hovered for a while, until a security guard came over and asked him to step away. "We just had lunch with Larry," Hof explained. "He's a friend."

The Bunnyranch's dining room has nothing comparable to the linen napkins and sushi chef at Flynt's casino; it is equipped with two Formica tables, a ripped leather couch, and an exercise bicycle that seems to serve primarily as a place for the cook to hang his coat. And yet, in these modest surroundings, Hof makes grandiose plans. Recently, he was the proud host of Dan Paulson, a theatre and TV-miniseries producer, and Ernest Thompson, who nineteen years ago won an Oscar for the screenplay adaptation of his play "On Golden Pond." In anticipation of their arrival, Hof had told me that his visitors from Hollywood wanted to make a movie about his ranch, although Paulson and Thompson turned out to have more modest ambitions, being interested in developing a cable-television series about a brothel—a "Sex and the City" kind of thing, only without the city and with more sex.

Paulson and Thompson were sleeker than the Bunnyranch's usual clientele: they wore good haircuts instead of baseball caps, and they both had on expensive-looking sweaters. They hung out for an evening and chatted with the girls, trying to strike up a home-town conversation with Joy about Los Angeles. Thompson mentioned that he was staying in Pacific Palisades; Paulson said he lived in Beverly Hills. Where did she live? "South-Central," Joy replied.

Hof invited the men from Hollywood to have a seat in his dining room, which was thick with the smell of gravy. He said, "People think of prostitution and they think of a ratty mattress and a candle, but it's not that. This is a business." He explained how much money the girls are capable of earning. "If a girl needs five thousand dollars, she can come here and make it in two days," he said. He told them about Food Dude. He said that when Viagra appeared, his business went up twenty per cent. "It's like turbocharging," he said. He told them that he won't tolerate anyone calling his girls "sluts" or "bitches," although he admitted to using those terms himself in moments of passion, including one such moment the previous night. "We tell the customers who come here to treat it as a singles bar, just one where the odds are real good," he said, grinning.

Then Hof led Paulson and Thompson down the hall to Air Force Amy's room, and she and Barely Legal Mel sat on the bed while Paulson and Thompson asked about the details of their professional lives. Someone had put a copy of "Lesbian Ho' Down at the Bunnyranch" in the VCR, and Amy cast occasional, uninterested glances at the X-rated images of herself on the screen: the bitten lip, the closed eyes. The previous evening, Amy had mentioned to me, as she hobbled in her heels to stand in yet another lineup, that she wanted to get out of the prostitution business within a year—that it was taking a toll on her body, that her joints ached liked a football player's. "I'll be too old for this next year," she said. "I hope I'll be too rich for this next year." This evening, though, her bedroom crowded with riveted guests, Amy was the picture of an enthusiastic professional. She sat on the bed, smoothing her skin-tight silver dress. "I love men and I love sex and I love money," she said, and Hof smiled with satisfaction at the sight of his top girl making another sale. ♦

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ANNALS OF LAW

SO YOU WANT A DIVORCE

When someone tries to get out of a marriage, Lester Wallman makes someone pay.

BY LARISSA MACFARQUHAR

Lester Wallman is a divorce lawyer. He charges three hundred and fifty dollars an hour—a confident but not presumptuous price in Manhattan—and he shares a suite with seven colleagues on the thirtieth floor of the Empire State Building. He approaches a fresh divorce case like a sporting challenge on a fair day, delighting in its feints and stratagems, in the delicate probing for pain and weakness in his adversaries, in the bluffing and the playing of roles, in the subtle choreography of negotiation. Grieving clients do not dispirit him, and treacherous lawyers do not rile him. This is why he is successful.

One morning at ten o'clock, Wallman waited in his office for the arrival of a lawyer with whom he was to discuss a prenuptial agreement. This was the first time he had met the lawyer, so he planned to needle him a bit, to see what he was made of. Wallman has a repertoire of little tricks for occasions like this one. Continually mispronouncing his adversary's name produces a good effect. Sometimes he will arrive late at a lawyer's office and apologize, saying that he had trouble finding it because his host's name wasn't on the board downstairs. This tactic can send his opponent hurrying down to the lobby in distress. It is an integral part of Wallman's self-image that he takes life and himself less seriously than the next divorce lawyer, and is thus relatively invulnerable to tiny humiliations of this sort. "I don't live my practice," he likes to say. "For me, a case is always Jones v. Jones, not Wallman v. Jones."

The other lawyer arrived, a hefty Ruth's Chris Steak House type in his thirties wearing a checked suit, a bright-blue shirt, and an orange-green-and-blue tie. "That's quite an outfit you've got on there," Wallman remarked, smiling and extending his hand. Later, he explained that he considered telling the lawyer he looked like a character from "Guys and Dolls," but thought that might be going too far.

"Yeah, well," the lawyer said uncertainly. "Keeps me awake."

"Did you come very far today?" Wallman asked with an innocent expression.

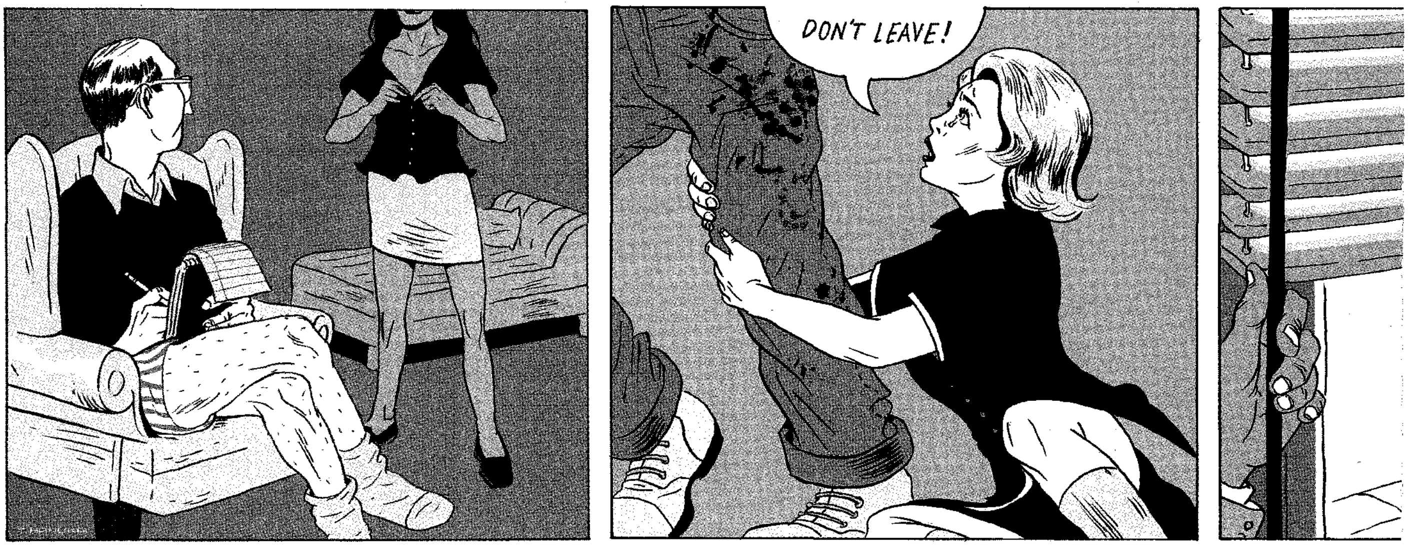
"Rockaway, Queens."

"I haven't been out there for a hundred years!" Wallman exclaimed in a friendly way, his eyes crinkling with nostalgia for the days when Lester Wallman would have been caught dead in Rockaway, Queens. "They still have all those boarding houses there?"

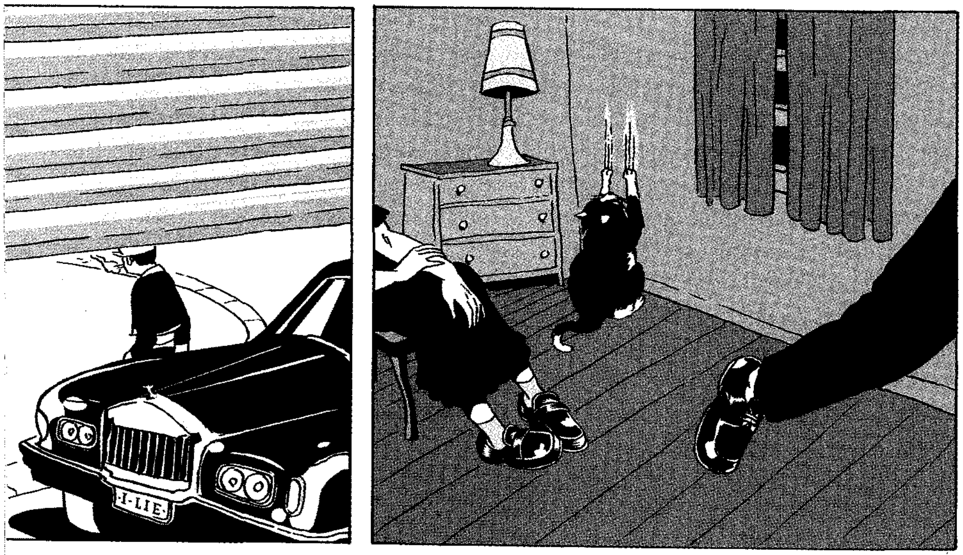
"Not since the fifties," the lawyer told him, missing a chance to parry with a gibe about Wallman's age. (Wallman is seventy-two.) "It's all apartment buildings along the water now."

Wallman's client was a typical prenuptial customer: a man in his forties worth about ten million dollars, with three children, recovering from an especially unpleasant divorce. (Wallman had handled the divorce, too.) This client was interested in insuring only his future financial happiness, but prenuptials have incorporated agreements on any number of subjects: the apportionment of closet space, custody arrangements for pets, number of copulations per week. One stipulated that the wife would pay her husband a sum of money for every pound she gained over a certain weight; she would be reimbursed if she slimmed down again.

Wallman and his client had worked out an initial proposal that, by courtroom standards, was comically stingy: if the client and his wife divorced after five years, he'd pay her a hundred thousand dollars; after ten years, two hundred thousand; and after fifteen years three hundred and fifty thousand, if she agreed to waive alimony. Although he earned about a million dollars a year, he wanted child support (if they had children) calculated as though he earned two hun-



As a matrimonial lawyer, Wallman deals with prenups, violent spouses, and indigent men with chauffeurs. "You know your marriage is on dred thousand. This proposal, however, was merely the first, rather pugilistic move in a game that Wallman expected to be played for months. “The wedding isn’t until October,” he reminded the other lawyer as he left, smiling and shaking his hand goodbye. “That gives us plenty of time.”



the rocks when your husband is sleeping with both your mother and your father,” a colleague says.

TOMER HANUKA

Wallman grew up in the Bronx. His father worked in the post office; his mother was a housewife. In looks and manner, Wallman resembles a genial shopkeeper in a fifties Technicolor Western. His hair is white and combed haphazardly back over his head in strands that curl down to about an inch below the collar of his shirt, and when he reads he puts on a pair of gold-rimmed half-spectacles. He speaks slowly and smiles a lot. In the office, he wears a blue-and-red plaid shirt with a maroon knit tie, or a pale-blue-and-white shirt with cowboy pockets. When he leaves the office to meet with other lawyers, he wears a gray suit with a white pocket handkerchief. He is deeply tanned and wears a gold chain bracelet. Wallman’s tan and his taste in jewelry are common among his colleagues. The divorce lawyer forages in a humid emotional atmosphere, and his plumage is appropriately tropical.

As divorce lawyers go, Wallman is neither famous nor obscure. He is known in certain circles in Manhattan because he’s been around since the days when there weren’t many lawyers who specialized in matrimonial work. His most celebrated clients to date have been Mrs. David Merrick (wife of the Broadway producer), Bob Murphy (voice of the New York Mets), and Ron Darling (the Mets pitcher). He also represented a drummer in a well-known rock band, but he has difficulty recalling his name. He thinks it was Elvis Jones, but it may have been Alvin, or Ray.

Wallman is a Renaissance divorce lawyer, keeping his hand in a range of enterprises appropriate to a gentleman. He plays tennis and squash. He owns a working farm in upstate New York, which he and Mrs. Wallman visit on weekends. He has always been very involved in local politics and with community groups, of which he belongs to a startling number. Wallman maintains a series of brittle scrapbooks in which he has compiled a detailed documentation of his career. One yellowed newspaper clipping announces, in contiguous columns, Kennedy’s election as President and Wallman’s election to the presidency of the Young Men’s Republican Club of New Rochelle. In 1965, Wallman ran for the position of Third Ward Supervisor of Westchester County, having campaigned on the slogan “You Too Can Win with Wallman: Because Lester Wallman is a man on the move.” His platform included plans to stock local lakes with fish for fishermen, and sponsorship of a safe-driving week. The picture of Wallman that emerges from his scrapbooks is of a man not moved by any passion in particular but attached, rather, to the principles of decorum and well-roundedness. “To me, life is a multitude

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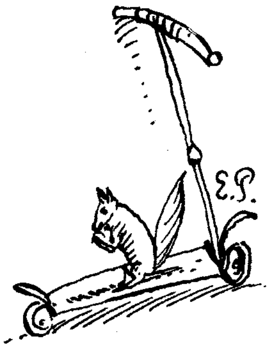
of wonders," Wallman likes to say. "Was it Heinz's fifty-seven flavors? I believe in tasting each one."

Wallman's next client stood in the waiting area holding his raincoat. Earlier that day, Wallman had described this man, Mr. H., as "one of the most boring people I've met in my life." Mr. H. shifted nervously about. His khakis were a little too short for him. Several strands of hair had come unstuck from his scalp and swayed softly as he moved, like reeds. In answer to a comment that divorce lawyers all seem to have offices above the twenty-fifth floor, he said sadly, "That's so the clients can jump." His voice shook—though not, it seemed, so much from anxiety or emotion as from lack of use. Mr. H., an employee in a financial-services firm, lived in a house in one of the outer boroughs with Mrs. H., a schoolteacher, and her thirty-five cats. They had been married for thirty-seven years but had not spoken during the last ten. When they needed to communicate, they wrote notes. Mr. H. came home from work every weeknight at seven o'clock and went to sleep. In his spare time, he had managed to accumulate a significant gambling debt.

Mr. and Mrs. H., in the midst of a divorce proceeding that had already extended for more than a year, had had some difficulty in dividing up their assets because they couldn't agree on how much their house was worth: he thought the neighborhood was going uphill and she thought it was going downhill. They had planned to settle the matter by selling the house and dividing the proceeds, but it was going to be a tough sell because the rooms smelled strongly of cat urine. Mr. H. would pay for a cleaning if Mrs. H. got rid of the cats, but she refused. At this point in the negotiations, Mrs. H. had become dissatisfied with the services of her lawyer and retained new counsel. The task now was to determine the value of the spouses' respective assets, so they could be fairly split. According to Wallman, the husband's practice was worth a hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars, his 401(k) a hundred thousand after taxes, and his stock account thirty thousand; on the wife's side was her teaching license, worth sixty-three thousand; her pension, eighty thousand after taxes; and the house (she had since decided that she wanted the house), a hundred and forty thousand after the remaining mortgage payments and capital-gains taxes were subtracted.

Twenty years ago, property was not apportioned in this way: assets were simply retained by the spouse (generally the husband) who held them in his or her name, and the wife received alimony. But then, in 1980, New York's equitable-distribution law was drafted—Wallman, in his most public moment of glory, sat on the drafting committee—which dictated that, since both spouses contribute to the prosperity of a marriage, in a divorce assets should be divided "equitably," taking into account factors such as the length of the marriage and respective earning capacities. The law was conceived as a means of compensating wives, but because it mandates the evaluation of every part of the marital estate—every check written, every phone bill paid, every purchase charged—it has also made divorce infinitely more complex, time-consuming, and expensive.

If you ask Wallman's former partner Philip Greenberg about equitable distribution, he will tell you that it is a dastardly scheme designed to rob men, and that the judges who enforce it are shamelessly biased toward wives. Ten years ago, when figures from Lenore Weitzman's 1985 book, "The Divorce Revolution," were still widely quoted (Weitzman claimed that one year after divorce the average woman was seventy-three per cent worse off financially, and the average man forty-two per cent better off), Greenberg would have sounded bizarre and reactionary. But the figures were refuted—Weitzman herself conceded five years ago that her calculations were wrong—and now even lawyers who would admit to being shamelessly biased toward wives agree that these days many men are getting the short end of the stick. Take a man with three children, married for fifteen years, who's earning eighty thousand a year as a lawyer, and whose wife has never worked. If he got divorced, he'd be required to pay twenty-nine per cent of his pre-tax income, minus alimony ($20,300), to his wife in child support, assuming that she got custody; his law practice might be assessed as worth something like a hundred thousand dollars, which he would probably be required to divide with his wife; and he would have to pay at least ten thousand a year in alimony. Since he would likely be permitted to pay out his wife's share of his practice over a period of, say, ten years, he'd be left with an after-tax yearly income of around twenty-two thousand.



A few hours before Mr. H. arrived in his office, Wallman had met with Mrs. H.'s new legal team for the first time. There were two lawyers involved: Allen Green—a tall, bald man in dark pinstripes, with an air of craftiness that was not unappealing—and Green's co-counsel, Elaine Friedman, a woman of around seventy who bore a passing resemblance to Betty Friedan. Wallman was hoping to make his client appear as impoverished and pathetic as possible, so as to persuade the lawyers that he was unable to provide for his wife. By way of an opening volley, Wallman claimed that Mr. H.'s firm was going under.

"He can always hang out a shingle," Green countered.

"At sixty-three, he can't change jobs!"

"He's sixty, and I have an accountant who's eighty," Friedman returned. (Mr. H. was indeed sixty, as Wallman knew well enough. Throughout the negotiations, Wallman adjusted figures to his advantage, to see if he could get away with it.)

"He doesn't have the personality to go into business by himself," Wallman protested. "He's the biggest nebbish I've ever run into."

"Well, she shouldn't have to bear the burden of his gambling debts."

"Those are marital debts. If he won a million dollars in the lottery, you'd want half of it."

"One of the problems here," Green persisted, growing annoyed, "is that for the past nine years he hasn't given

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her a cent. What has he done with his earnings?"

"Are you implying that my client is hiding funds?" Wallman inquired, with a surprised expression.

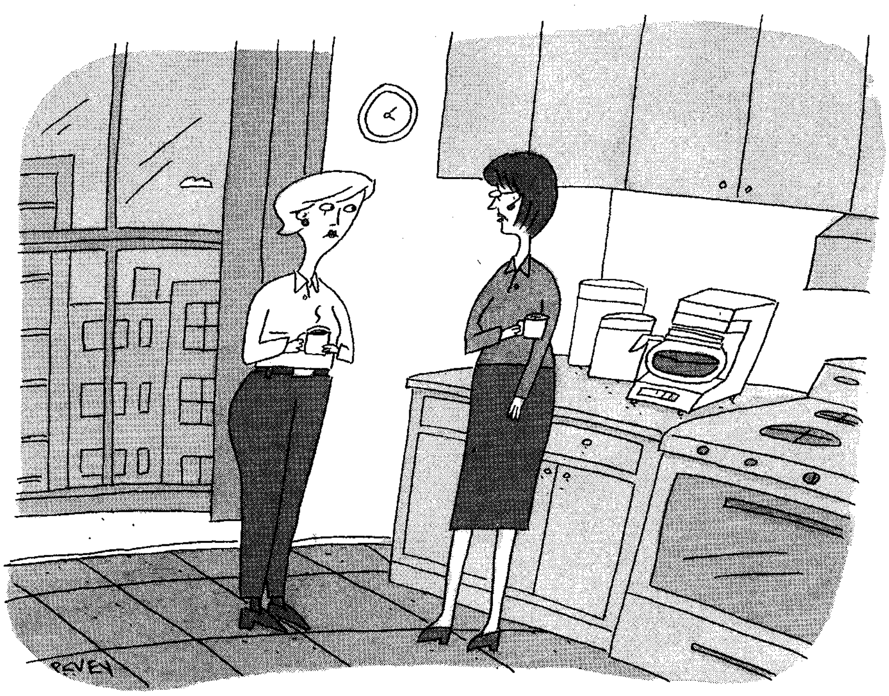
"Look," Green said. "Here is a man who eats a six-dollar lunch, who comes home at night and goes to sleep. He has no life, no car, he earns a six-figure income plus seven hundred a month from his tenant, but all he's saved is thirty thousand dollars in a stock account. What has he done with the money?"

"If you can find where he's secreting assets, I'll say you're right." Wallman shrugged.

Wallman, naturally, would not speculate about whether Mr. H. was actually secreting money, but he acknowledged that it is far from unusual for a person to do some preliminary rearranging of his finances before asking for a divorce. There are even books (such as "Screw the Bitch: Divorce Tactics for Men") to inspire him, should his own worst instincts prove insufficiently creative. Some people incorporate their businesses, since it's easy to place a low value on a new corporation. Some open an account in the name of a relative—often one who lives abroad—into which they siphon cash. Many quit their jobs, so as to appear impoverished when it comes time to calculate alimony and child support. (Every divorce lawyer knows a story about a doctor who took up plumbing during a divorce, only to return to medicine later.) Those who own their own businesses set up nonexistent companies to which they write checks, as though they were suppliers.

Others, of course, simply lie. One client of Wallman's swore up and down in court that he had no money, until the opposing lawyer raised the courthouse blinds and pointed out the chauffeured Rolls he had waiting outside. In another case, Wallman investigated a client's husband who had also pleaded indigence. His efforts were rewarded by the memorable pleasure of entering into evidence an aerial photograph, ten feet by twenty, that showed the husband's estate in Westchester: forty-odd acres, including lakes, waterfalls, and an indoor riding track.

Wallman stood on Madison Avenue attempting to hail a taxi. He clutched his briefcase in one hand and, with the other, waved energetically at the traffic. Wallman is one of those dogged taxi-hailers who believe in holding an arm out even if no taxi is in sight, in the apparent hope that one might be coaxed into existence through sheer hard work. When the light turned red for the third time, Wallman lowered his arm and consulted his watch. Ten to one. He was due for a meeting at the office of an opponent, thirty blocks uptown, at one o'clock. It was often tactically advantageous, he knew, to arrive at a negotiating session a little late, but to arrive more than a little late only made one seem rude or disorganized. He walked to the corner and peered down Thirty-fourth Street.



"I think I might be guilty of a self-hate crime."

Presenting himself at last at the offices of Goldweber, Lauriello & Epstein, Wallman was greeted effusively by Elyse Goldweber, whom he had opposed before and whom he characterized, under his breath, as *extremely* aggressive, and cordially by Nina Epstein, whom he had never met. Wallman expressed surprise that they were both working on the case.

"Because it's *you*, Lester!" Goldweber said, guiding Wallman into a small, windowless conference room that gave the impression of being a sealed chamber many stories below ground. "Everyone wants to work with you!"

Goldweber was accessorized in girlish pink—pink scarf over a pink sweater, sparkly pink flower hairclips, and a pink scrunchy—but she conveyed a commanding presence from behind her expansive bosom, like that of a plutocrat from behind his belly. Epstein, a tall woman with dark lipliner, was dressed conservatively in a navy-blue suit. Goldweber and Epstein had been college roommates, classmates at Brooklyn Law School, and bridesmaids at each other's weddings, and now, twenty-odd years later, they finished each other's sentences in identical Fran Drescher accents.

The case at hand was a particularly depressing one. Wallman's client, Dr. D., a well-to-do doctor in her mid-forties, had been married to Mr. D. for two and a half years. Mr. D. was a self-employed artist, twenty years older than his wife, with very little money of his own. Mr. and Dr. D. had had a fight, during which Mr. D. had knocked Dr. D. down and then left her. Nonetheless, Dr. D. badly wanted her husband back, and she thought her money could be a lure. Since she and her husband had been married such a short time, and only assets acquired during a marriage are deemed marital property, most of Dr. D.'s possessions were not subject to division in the event of a divorce; thus, she knew, if Mr. D. wanted her money he would have to return to the marriage. Wallman took a dim view of Mr. D. He suspected

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"The dog paid me."

• •

that Mr. D. would demand, as his price for returning, to become joint owner of his wife's assets, and would then, at some later point, divorce her and abscond with his half of the property. Dr. D.'s other point of leverage was their child. Mr. D. was agitated that he had not seen the child since he left, and he wanted regular visitation hours established immediately.

"I appear with my bow and arrow, my harp, and my olive branch," Wallman began dramatically, when all three were seated. "My client wants her husband back. She wants him at almost any price. So what would it take to bring him home?"

Goldweber and Epstein looked at each other, and asked to be excused. "They're not prepared," Wallman said gleefully, after they left the room. "This must have come as a complete shock to them."

The element of surprise was a welcome bolster to what was in other respects a rather weak bargaining position. Three minutes later, Goldweber and Epstein returned.

"We have to have an interim agreement about the child," Epstein said, drawing her chair up to the table. "He wants morning visitations every day, Monday through Friday."

"I think that's excessive, but I'll take it back to her."

"We've also got a problem here," Epstein continued. "Where are the visitations going to take place? He has nowhere to stay in Manhattan. He wants to see the child at home."

"He's living with some relative in New Jersey," Goldweber added, making a face. "Somewhere I never heard of."

This was not so simple a request as it appeared. After Mr. D. knocked his wife down, Dr. D. had taken out an order of protection barring him from her building. She would rescind the order of protection only if he agreed to come back to her on a permanent basis. Wallman pointed this out.

"Listen, Lester," Goldweber said. "If she really wants to reconcile with this guy, she's going to have to step up to the plate. Nobody wants a custody battle."

"What about child support?" Wallman asked. "He's not giving her a plugged nickel. I'm expecting him to pay seventeen per cent of his income, plus half the cost of day care."

"Drugs? Are we on drugs today? Do you know what he earns?" Goldweber expostulated.

"She tells me around fifty thousand a year."

"That's not what he told us," said Epstein. "More like thirty thousand. What's she earning?"

"About two hundred thousand. Well, let's meet in the middle. Will he agree to pay seventeen per cent of forty thousand?" Wallman asked.

"I'll talk to him about it."

"Is he looking for anything else?"

"Yes. Spousal maintenance." Even though he wasn't paying rent, Mr. D. wanted money to help maintain his life style while he and his wife were living apart.

"How much?"

Epstein and Goldweber looked at each other.

"I'm not getting answers," Wallman prodded, after a moment. "Is that because you're embarrassed?"

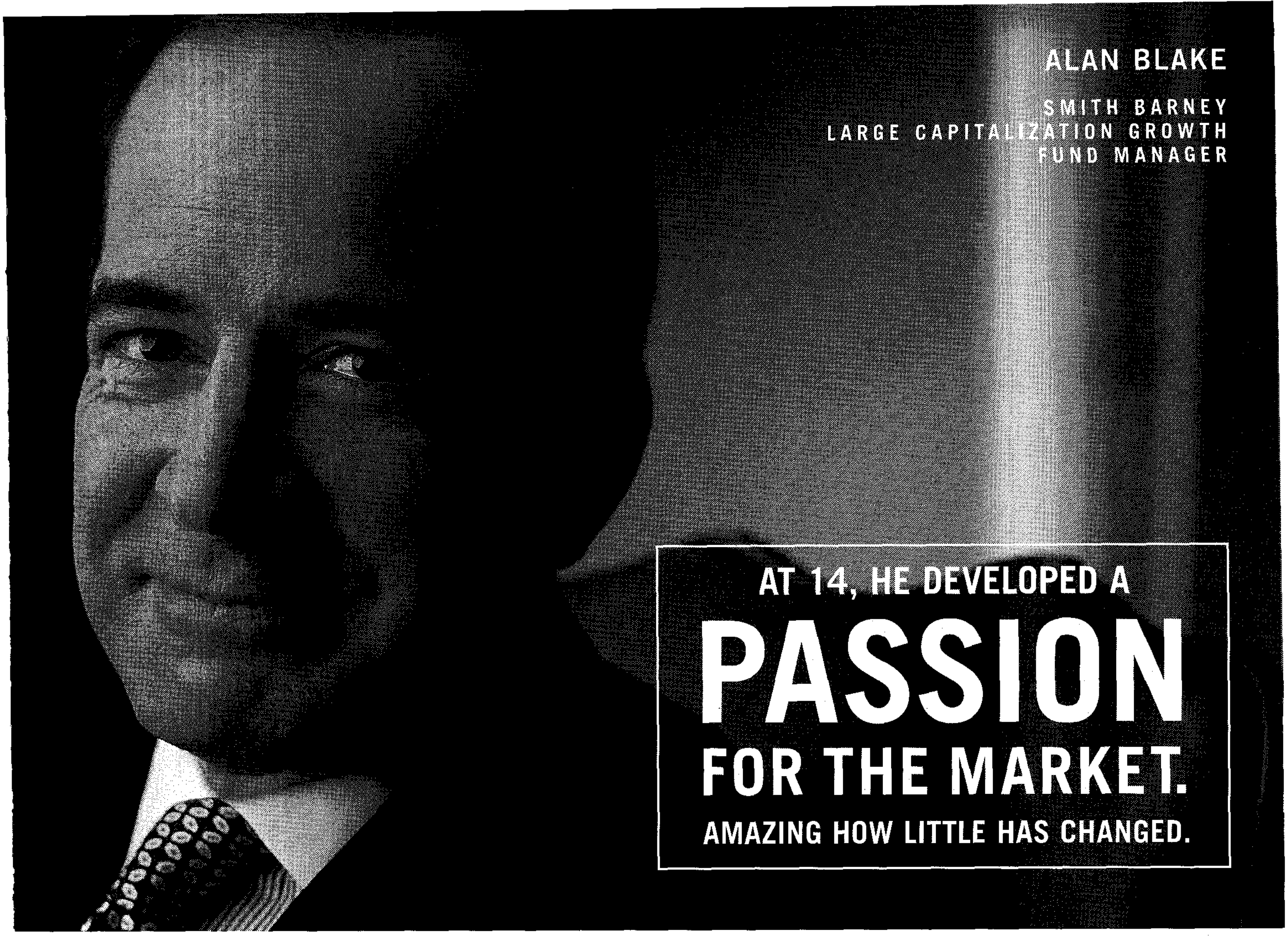
"He wants two thousand a month," Epstein told him.

"Is he serious?" Wallman asked, with an incredulous smile.

"Look," Goldweber said, in a soothing tone. "If she really wants him back, it's an investment of twelve thousand for a six-month trial period. It's not so much money. He needs to feel that his noneconomic contributions are appreciated. I'd tell her what I tell all these husbands who come in, which is you can't expect someone to marry you and be the mother of your children and not own part of the house. It's just wrong."

Wallman left the office shaking his head. "His game is to get a piece of her assets," he said. "She'll get suckered into it, and then he'll leave her again. He's using the olive branch to get from her what he couldn't get in court." Out in the hallway, he pushed the button to summon the elevator. "I'd tell her she's being suckered," he said. "But that's not what she wants to hear."

Perhaps the most formative aspect of Wallman's profession is a prolonged exposure to the pettiest of human vices. The war stories that divorce lawyers chortle over at conferences touch upon every imaginable revenge script, from the rudimentary to the Olympian. In one of Wallman's cases, a spouse trained the family dog to urinate on the other spouse's bed. Another of Wallman's clients phoned the opposing lawyer's wife and told her that her husband had been killed in a car accident. Wallman's friend Norman Sheresky, a dead ringer for Sydney Greenstreet, tells tales about women who come up to him at cocktail parties and say how happy they are that he's representing Bob (or Oliver or Miles) in his divorce—the catch being that Sheresky has never heard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of Bob (or Oliver or Miles), but realizes he must be a rat who's been deceiving the woman into thinking he's leaving his wife.

When members of the profession gather, they swap sordid tales in a spirit of genial one-upmanship. Jan Warner, a good old boy from South Carolina, will regale a group at dinner with the tale of an unfortunate client whose first wife rang his doorbell and shot herself dead when he opened the door; whose second wife allegedly tried to poison him; whose third wife was driven to divorce him by the machinations of wife No. 2; and who remarried wife No. 2 twenty-four hours after divorcing wife No. 3 and was subsequently relieved by her of close to half a million dollars. Gerald Nissenbaum of Massachusetts creates a striking impression with the opening line "You know your marriage is on the rocks when your husband is sleeping with both your mother and your father." This line is not a joke but an account of one of his cases: the husband was a psychiatrist who married a young woman who had been his patient since she was sixteen; her parents were also in individual therapy with him, and he had seduced them both, and pursued all three relationships until his treachery was discovered.

Divorce lawyers claim that their clients are less pleasant to deal with than murderers, who are, at least, on their best behavior. Each of Wallman's colleagues has a few rules of thumb for distinguishing the true wackos from those who are merely emotional wrecks. Many, for instance, adhere to the venerable shopping-bag rule: any prospective client who shows up carrying shopping bags filled with "evidence" against his or her spouse is to be delicately turned away.

But the contempt some clients inspire in their lawyers is nothing compared with the loathing and rage that lawyers inspire in their clients. Embittered former clients have set up grass-roots organizations dedicated to unmasking divorce-lawyer corruption and, more exotically, vast underground lawyer conspiracy networks. Even other lawyers consider their matrimonial colleagues vulgar and morally bankrupt. A recent lawyer poll found that, out of thirty legal specialties, divorce law ranked last in perceived intellectual difficulty, twenty-ninth in reputation for unethical conduct, and twenty-ninth in prestige (below even personal injury).

It is not rare for a client's rage to manifest itself in violence. Stories circulate. One divorce lawyer was chased around a courtroom by an enraged spouse wielding a cane. Another was threatened with an axe. Many divorce lawyers have been shot, some fatally. Rumor has it that one unfortunate had his nose bitten off by his client's spouse and was awarded two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in compensation. In such an atmosphere, wise divorce lawyers take precautions. One hides a golf club behind his door. Some keep guns. Of course, to the assailants, mutilation and death can seem only fitting punishment. A 1992 report written by the journalist Karen Winner for Mark Green, New York's Commissioner of Consumer Affairs, found divorce lawyers to be engaging in a number of unsavory practices. One charged penalty fees for spousal reconciliations. Others demanded an enormous sum just before a case went to trial, threatening to quit if it was not paid. This is why so many people have tried to represent themselves, or made use of such technologies as "Quick Court"—a machine resembling an A.T.M. that could be found, until recently, in Arizona's courthouses, and enabled a person to print out appropriate divorce papers by touching buttons on a screen ("Has your marriage irretrievably broken down? Touch yes or no").

Wallman believes that his profession's reputation is improving, and that may be true. It is difficult to imagine how it could get worse. Twenty-seven years ago, *New York* ran an article that Wallman and other Manhattan divorce lawyers still talk about. Titled "The Roughest Divorce Lawyers in Town," it described a species of the profession known as "bombers," who would do practically anything to win a case. Husband not a citizen? Deport him. Wife given no grounds for complaint? Hire a gigolo to seduce her, and if your son wants a divorce, too, hire the same gigolo for the daughter-in-law.

At the time, the article only worsened the already execrable public image of divorce lawyers, but now, oddly, Wallman looks back on those bomber days, and the particular bombers depicted in the article, with nostalgia. Happy Halpern! Irving Erdheim! Mitchell Salem Fisher, the bomber-cum-rabbi! Ask Wallman about the great figures of the past, and these old Manhattan bombers are the ones he will conjure up: the ones who were at their peak when the profession was still exciting—who witnessed the climactic hotel-room break-ins, flashbulbs popping, sheets clutched in panic. They were the white knights who, in the days when adultery still meant something, would stride across a courtroom, spinning a story and building a mood—the helpless, wronged wife, the lascivious deceiver—until their audience quivered with outrage.

It's not so much the lost white-knight role, though, that causes Wallman to sigh when he thinks about practicing divorce law in the sixties. What he really misses—although, naturally, he disapproves of it politically—is the old law dictating that no alimony be awarded to a wife who was found at fault. Because of this rule, divorce used to be an all-or-nothing game. "It wasn't a question of getting stuck on the fifty-yard line or the forty-yard line or the ten-yard line," Wallman remembers wistfully. "You either scored a touchdown or you lost. If you proved that she committed adultery, she got nothing—so you hit a lot of home runs. Now you're hitting singles and doubles. It's not as explosive as the old days."

Today, in the era of no-fault and equitable distribution, divorce law is just not the same. It's not moral theatre anymore. But Wallman is not a man to expend excessive sentiment on the past. He looks to the future. He has plans. And meanwhile his extracurricular career continues to flourish. He recently completed a mystery novel. It is about a divorce lawyer whose clients are murdered, one by one. ♦

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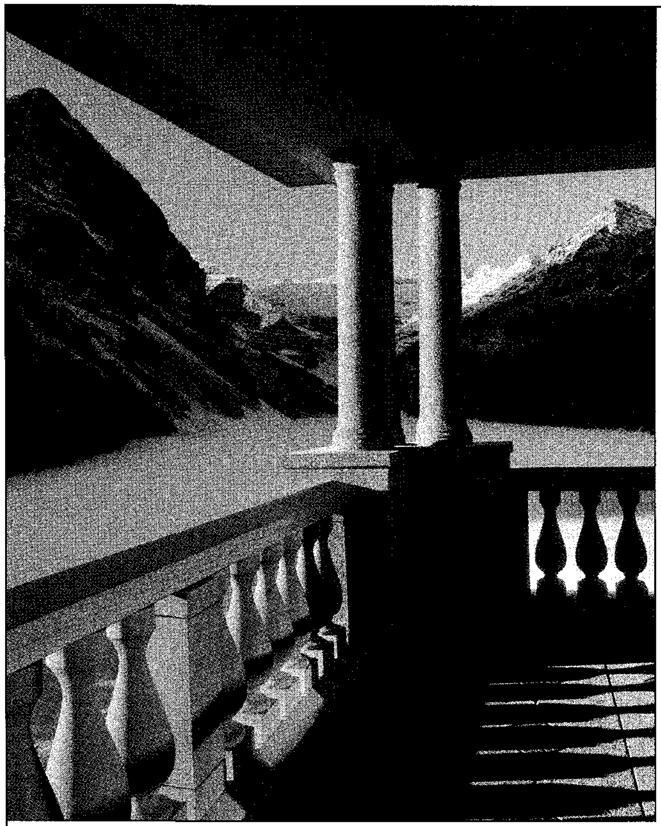

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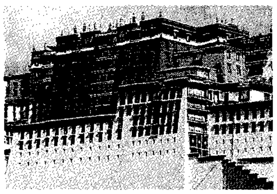
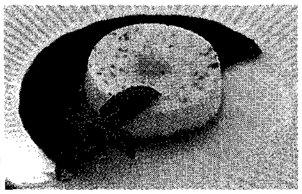
miles of discovery

BY PAUL BURNHAM FINNEY

Nothing is too far-fetched in the fast-emerging world of "travel enrichment," the buzz phrase that means travelling for information as well as pleasure. Americans are working harder than ever before, and leisure time to expand their knowledge base is given a high priority. "Every travel experience must be a peak experience to enrich every moment of reduced spare time," says Wolf Hengst, Four Seasons chief executive.

Once-in-a-lifetime jaunts are among the salient options. It's not beyond the pale to find yourself planning a $62,000 round-the-world spin by commodious chartered jet or a $5,040 gourmet splurge at Cordon Bleu's cooking school in Paris. That is, if you're not already preoccupied with making Madagascar (the Galápagos of the southwestern Indian Ocean), Bhutan (an East Himalayan kingdom), or Palau (a tropical South Pacific fantasy), the next notches on your travel belt. Enrichment is as individualistic as the people who take to it with gusto. The trend cuts across classic categories, with elements of adventure, archaeology, art, cooking, sailing, self-improvement, and rejuvenation in the mix.



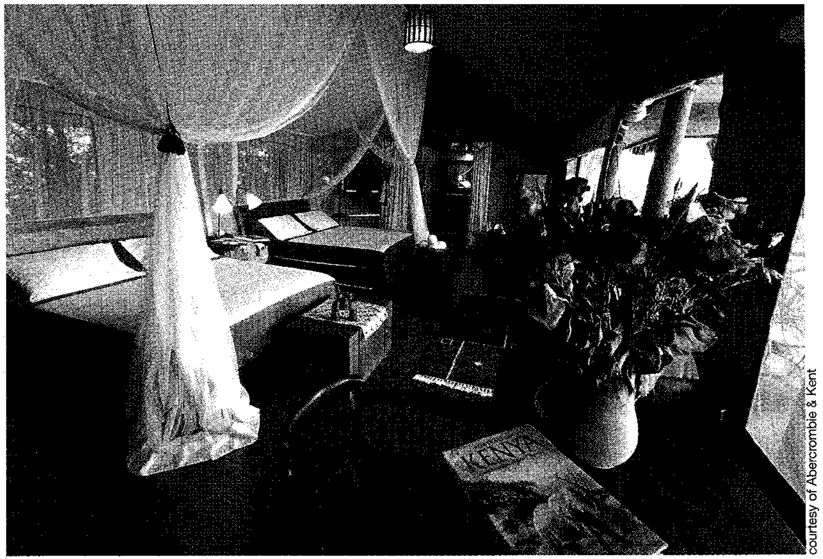


RED-CARPET TREATMENT. The elaborate Admont Benedictine Abbey in the Austrian province of Styria dates back to 1074.

TAILOR-MADE TRIPS

Travellers with an urge to enrich their vacations attach importance to tailor-made trips. "They want to be transformed by travel," says Keith Walden, a senior executive at Virtuoso (800-401-4274), a high-end network of 244 wired-in travel agents. "They jump into a unique destination head first—it could be a visit with an Amazonian tribe or with monks at a Ladakh temple. They want everything individualized. That's why chartering a *gulet* to sail along the 'Turquoise Coast' of Turkey is such a hot option these days," adds Walden. "No buses. You're on your own. And there's a flood of travellers taking advantage of the friendly relations between Turkey and Greece that make it easy to sail between the two countries."

China Travel Consultants (888-7-BEIJING) offers a trip to visit dinosaur fields in Mongolia among its many other individualized options. Given six months lead time, the agency will develop a totally tailor-made, personalized China itinerary that is even more spectacular. And some unique attractions sell themselves—they're that strikingly different. British Columbia's seven-thousand-acre Fairmont Chateau Whistler, called the premier ski resort of North America by both *Ski* and *Skiing* magazines, brings you face-to-face with fifty or so black bears that live on Whistler and Blackcomb mountains. In a one-day "Wild for Bears" package ($249 per person, double occupancy, meals included; 800-441-1414) between May and October, you visit the bears in their own native habitat. Guided by black bear aficionado Michael Allen, you'll see bears grazing on clover grass, horsetails, and, just before winter hibernation, sugary huckleberries.



courtesy of Abercrombie & Kent

CAMPING OUT.
Olonana is a new, deluxe tent camp for travellers on the banks of Kenya's Mara River in the Masai Mara Conservation Area.

INTO THE UNKNOWN

The new breed of traveller has a passion for adventurous life-affirming experiences. Founded as a safari-adventure outfit in 1962, Abercrombie & Kent (800-323-7308) continues to offer trips to exotic and previously inaccessible places. It could be birding in Botswana; visiting the penguins in Antarctica aboard pioneer astronomer Lindblad's original ship, The Explorer; or viewing Alaska's glaciers up close aboard the twenty-passenger Safari Quest.

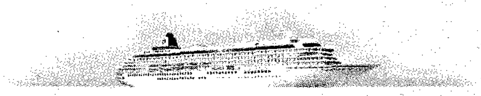
Many of the trips packaged for the learning-while-travelling vacationer have been made possible by the opening of off-limits areas just in the past decade. Thirteenth-century Marco Polo had a thirst for adventure and excitement, and his legend inspired A&K's romantic eighteen-day tour of "Old China: In the Footsteps of Marco Polo." After spending five days in Shanghai, travellers are whisked to Tunxi to explore villages rich in the treasures of the Ming Dynasty. A day is spent on the summit of Huangshan, one of China's most sacred mountains, before proceeding to historic Nanjing on the Yangtze River. Then it's on to explore ancient Xian, Zhengzhou, and Kaifeng before the trip ends in Marco Polo's beloved Mongol capital "Dadu," now the bustling city of Beijing.

Exotic Indochina with its lush beauty, charming folklore, and violent history has become a beacon for travellers intent on pushing the envelope of discovery. A sixteen-day A&K tour, "Images of Indochina," ($6,375) covers Hong Kong, Vietnam,

Cover, clockwise left to right: Potala Palace image courtesy of Abercrombie & Kent; © Nik Wheeler/Corbis; Eastern Africa image courtesy of Abercrombie & Kent; Golden Door image © Nik Wheeler/Corbis; Positano image © Broderick Fox; *bottom:* Austrian Abbey image courtesy of Austrian National Tourism Office

It's not a voyage, *it's a*

Magic carpet ride.



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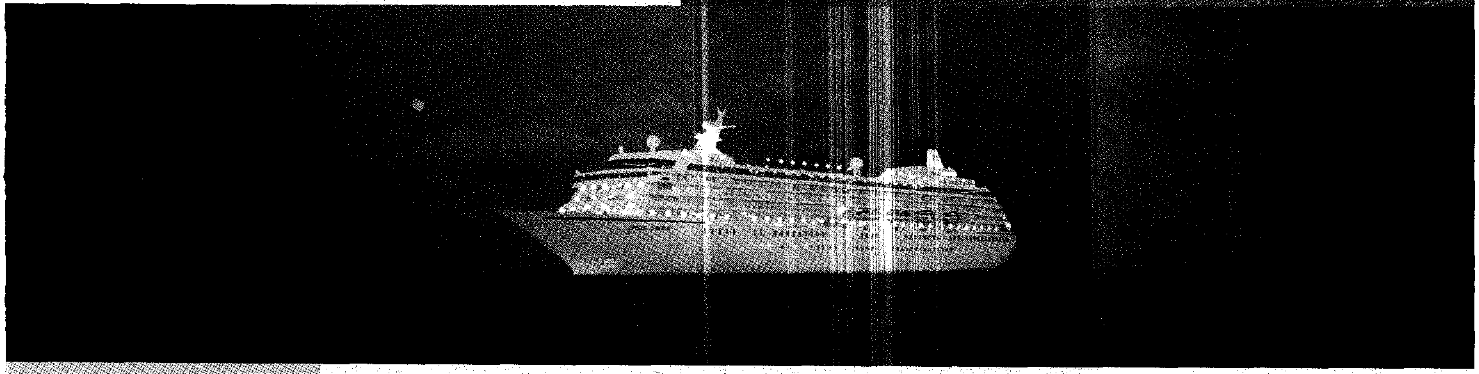


World Cruise * Europe * Asia * South America * Africa * Alaska

Cambodia, and Thailand. Highlights are stops at Heu, the former imperial capital of Vietnam that still resonates with echoes of its royal past; Danang's historic trading port of Hoi An; the Vietnam battlefield of Cu Chi with its labyrinthine tangle of underground tunnels; China Beach, where American GIs repaired for brief respites; the Silver Pagoda and extravagant Khmer artwork of Phnom Penh in Cambodia; and Angkor Wat at sunset. The last few days are spent in fascinating Bangkok, ensconced in a posh hotel beside the Chao Phraya River.

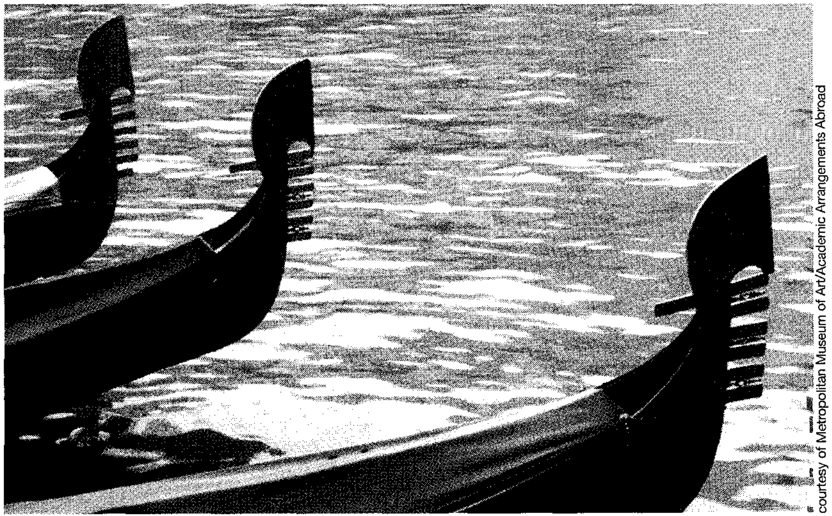
ENRICHMENT ON THE HIGH SEAS

As they slip in and out of some of the world's most fascinating ports, with ever-changing itineraries, **Crystal Cruises'** 940-passenger Harmony and Symphony combine unusual shore excursions with unique shipboard activities. During the coming Alaska cruising season (with San Francisco departures from May 21–August 13), the Harmony is offering guests an insider's three-day, pre-cruise tour of Napa Valley vineyards. On board, passengers can learn much about food and wine in Q&A sessions and casual encounters with celebrity chefs such as Jacques Pépin, Alan Wong, and Hubert Keller, and wine experts such as importer Bartholomew Broadbent, Banfi's Phillip di Belardino, and Fred Dame, president of the Court of Master Sommeliers. And who wouldn't want to book the August 1st sailing with CNN star Larry King—suspenders and all—on board for chitchat?

On Crystal's Alaskan cruises, as on its other jaunts around the globe, the headliners are just the cake icing for the line's "Enrichment Lecture Program." Historians, geologists, and naturalists are on board to instruct on glaciers, wildlife, and the Alaskan frontier's history. And with all of Crystal's cabins recently wired for round-the-clock, dial-up access to the Internet, there's no worry about losing touch while cruising. You can send E-mails and log onto Web sites in the privacy of your cabin. Laptops are for rent at the paltry sum of five dollars a day. Just call it cybercruising (800-820-6663).

IN SEARCH OF AESTHETICS

Galleries and museums are still high priorities with travellers, but now they are more likely to want a comprehensive experience than an afternoon's excursion. There's probably no better place to begin researching a travel itinerary than the comprehensive, user-friendly Web site of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (www.metmuseum.org). Click on "Travel Programs" to review one- to three-week trips guided by members of the museum's curatorial staff. The Met sponsors roughly a dozen trips each year, some aboard the museum's spectacular windjammer, The Sea Cloud II. Upcoming is a one-week trip to Havana to investigate the "Art and Architecture of Cuba" (November 3–10, $4,850). Next year, "A Privileged View of Venice" (September 5–13, 2002, approximately $10,000) will include viewings of hidden masterpieces, private visits to patrician mansions, and star lecturer Olivier Bernier as guide.



courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art/Academic Arrangements Abroad

DON'T LOOK NOW.
See the hidden masterpieces of Venice next year through the trained eyes of The Metropolitan Museum of Art's curatorial staff.

Others might delve into the plein air tradition by attending an intensive one week landscape painting workshop in San Gimignano in Tuscany (Etruscan Tours, 212-780-3216), or one of the numerous art, art history, and writing classes offered in Assisi, the heart of Umbria (800-835-7454).

Art lovers can gain a fuller understanding of the Impressionists—Cezanne, Chagall, Monet, Van Gogh—by following A&K's "In the Footsteps of Famous Artists," (thirteen days, departures May 5 and October 6, $7,295; 800-323-7308). The trip begins with Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum and continues with the Picasso and Marmottan museums in Paris. Then there are stops at Avignon and Arles and Cezanne's studio in Aix en Provence. The journey winds up at the Chagall Museum in Nice.

(continued)

[redacted]

Theater an der Wien, "The Magic Flute", ovation for the Queen of the Night. To find out what illustrious occasions you won't want to miss this year, call 212/944 68 80 or look up www.experienceaustria.com.
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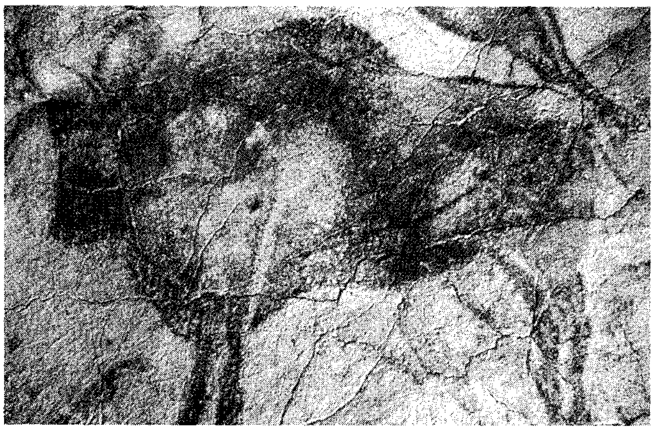
Even traveling to and from Austria can be a cultural *experience* — on one of Austrian Airlines' nonstop flights between New York, Washington DC or Chicago and *Vienna*.

AUSTRIAN AIRLINES

TRAVELLER'S ADVISORY

Travellers express themselves through the destinations and diversions they choose. Here are some enriching suggestions:

SPAIN While veteran visitors often head to Barcelona, travellers on the discovery circuit are now exploring the less-travelled north coast. From the Celtic and moorish settlements along the river inlets to the wild landscape of Galicia to the impressive Picos de Europa mountains, and the Basque country, much of Spain is as yet undiscovered. Among the north coast's highlights: the baroque Cathedral of St. James that brings pilgrims to gray-granite Santiago de Compostelo, the red-ocher cave paintings of bison at Altamira circa 15,000 B.C., and aristocratic San Sebastian with more castles than cafés. And, of course, tapas aplenty await (888-OK-SPAIN or 800-223-1356).



courtesy of the Tourist Office of Spain

BOOK IN ADVANCE.
The Altamira Caves of Cantabria have about 150 natural pigment paintings of Paleolithic Art that have been preserved for thousands of years.

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS On these blissfully laidback isles, yachtsmen gather at the Bitter End Yacht Club on Virgin Gorda during the first week of November for the annual regatta. Crew on one of the celebrity boats skippered by America's Cup winner Russell Coutts, Admiral's Cup winner Ken Read, or New York Yacht Club's Volvo Around the World Race winner Paul Cayard. No experience necessary; après-regatta fun unsurpassed.

Also on Virgin Gorda, bird watchers enjoy a paradise of crested Antillean hummingbirds, migratory thrashers, zenaida doves, herons, egrets, oystercatchers, sandpipers, and pelicans in marshes, along beaches, and on the bay (800-888-5563, Ext. 634).

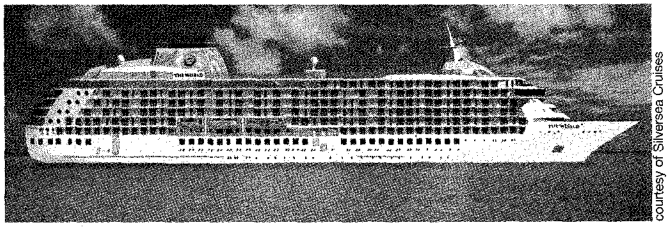
AUSTRIA Always a music lover's paradise, Austria is celebrating the hundredth anniversary of Giuseppe Verdi's death with a performance of "Falstaff," his last operatic masterpiece, at the Salzburg Festival (July 21–August 31) with Bryn Terfel in the title role. The Vienna State Opera is paying tribute to Verdi throughout the year. The KlangBogen Festival (July 11–August 24) in the Austrian capital will feature "Luisa Miller," one of Verdi's lesser known operas. The full cornucopia of Austrian festivals this summer also includes the Vienna Festival (May 7–June 18) and the Bregenz Festival (July 18–August 21), with a floating stage on Lake Constance. For a schedule of events and tickets, contact the Austrian National Tourist Office at 212-944-6880.

LANAI The "Lanai Visiting Artist Program," now in its tenth year, brings authors, musicians, actors, and chefs to the Hawaiian pineapple island of Lanai for performances and interactive exchanges. Among the talent on hand in 2001 are opera soprano Marie Plette, *Boston Globe* columnist Ellen Goodman, film critic Andrew Sarris, author Molly Haskell, Tiffany & Co. design director John Loring, and chef Ron Siegel of San Francisco's top-rated Masa's. Lanai has an Adirondacks-style Lodge at Koele and the beachside Manele Bay Hotel (800-321-4666, Code N23).

ADDRESS: THE WORLD

You're in your three-bedroom apartment decorated by Nina Campbell. The scenery outside the huge picture window is moving past. Knock, knock. A white-gloved butler enters with champagne and canapés as a prelude to dinner at a lauded French restaurant. It's 6:45 P.M. Do you know where you are?

Possibly you're approaching Rio de Janeiro at Mardi Gras time or Cannes just as the Film Festival unfolds. But you're definitely aboard **ResidenSea's The World**, a 40,000-ton ultra-luxe cruise ship with 110 apartments whose owners have paid a cool two to seven million for the privilege of residing at sea. For lesser mortals, the ship provides eighty-eight short-term suites that can be booked for a week or so through Silversea Cruises as the ResidenSea wends its way around the world beginning next January. The floating apartment house can enter most ports worth visiting from Buenos Aires to Bangkok, and plans to dock 265 out of 365 days for owners and other passengers to explore ashore (305-264-9090).



courtesy of Silversea Cruises

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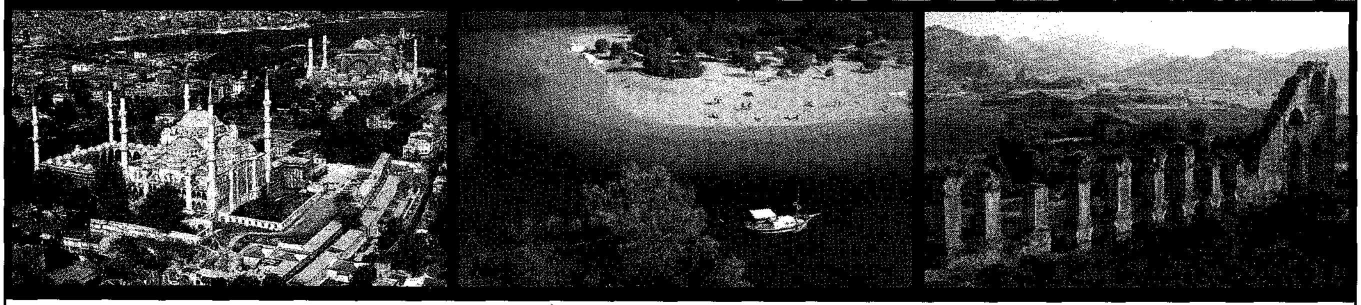

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(ITINERARY: ENRICHMENT TRAVEL *continued*)

courtesy of Austrian National Tourism Office

UNCONVENTIONALLY VIENNESE. Architectural style of Friedensreich Hundertwasser shows the influence of Gaudi as well as some Jugendstil architects.

WHEN IN ROME . . .

The enrichment player is often willing to invest considerable effort to insure an educational experience. It is not unusual for some earnest travellers while abroad to sign up for quick language courses or tutorials. In Prague you can learn a bit of Czech, or you can pick up some crucial Hungarian words and phrases in Budapest through one of Berlitz's language centers. Or, for a more comprehensive immersion, plan to stay with a host-family (800-457-7958).

In Tokyo, Kyoto, and several other Japanese cities, visitors can dine at home with Japanese families as part of a people-to-people cultural program. Citizen-ambassador hosts provide cultural insights in a way that traditional itineraries generally do not (Japan National Tourist Organization, 212-757-5640).

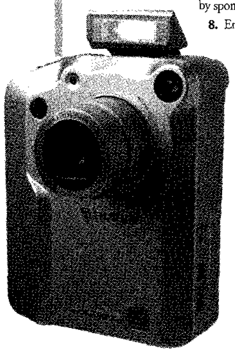
Travellers who want to get an insider's view of politics, can visit the Indian Parliamentary House in Delhi, where raucous sessions are commonplace. Or they can attend sessions of London's Houses of Parliament and survey proceedings from the galleries. (Obtain an admissions card from the U. S. Embassy or simply queue up and take a chance on getting in.)

American Express Platinum Travel Services are enriching (they call it "supersizing"), their exclusive tour packages for Platinum and Centurion card members to keep pace with the demands of the new purposeful traveller. In an Amex VIP visit to Spain's Valderama golf tournament this year, Platinum members can rub elbows with Tiger Woods, Curtis Strange, and other golfing greats and walk the course with players. It's possible that members will garner an insider tip or two from the pros. (Centurions will upstage Platinums with clubhouse access.) After the final round of the tourney, both categories of Amex guests get to play the challenging Valderama course (800-443-7672).

THE SKY HAS NO LIMITS

Forget first class and business class—the way to go is posh class, which entitles you to a whirlwind trip around the world in a reconfigured jet nearly as sumptuous as Air Force One. Intrav provides limousine pickup before departure, and in some cases even a valet to pack and unpack your bags.

Intrav's ultra "Round the World" trip (September 5–30, $143,900; 800-234-6900) hits most of the hot buttons for globetrotters. You fly in a sixteen-passenger, all-suite stretch 737-700 that includes a lounge and other luxuries. The journey begins at the Four Seasons in Las Vegas. After sampling the Strip's glitzy theme resorts (Venice, Bellagio, Paris), it's off to the awesome volcanic landscape of Kona in Hawaii, the delights of Sydney with its signature Opera House, a ride in historic rail cars on Australia's new Orient-Express, a yacht cruise in the "fragrant harbor" of Hong Kong and an overnight at The Peninsula Hotel, and a tour of the Forbidden City in Beijing. Among the other



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Rules for the "Itinerary: Enrichment" Great Giveaways sweepstakes:

1. **NO PURCHASE NECESSARY.**

2. All contestants must be 18 years of age or older and legal U.S. residents as of the date of entry.

3. Contestants may submit one (1) entry per household. Entries may be submitted anytime from 12:01 A.M. ET, April 16, 2001 through 11:59 P.M. ET, July 23, 2001. All entries must be received by July 23, 2001. All submitted entries become the property of *The New Yorker* and will not be acknowledged or returned.

4. Contestants may enter the sweepstakes by completing and submitting the business reply card in the "Itinerary: Enrichment" travel section of the April 23 & 30, 2001 issue of *The New Yorker*. Entries that are lost, late, misdirected, garbled, or incompletely received, for any reason, will not be eligible.

5. On or about July 24, 2001, one grand-prize winner will be selected at random from entries received. All decisions of the judges are final. Grand Prize is a FUJI FinePix 6800 Zoom Digital Camera. Total approximate retail value of grand prize package is $700. Income and other taxes, if any, are the sole responsibility of the winner. Winner will receive a written notification on or about August 1, 2001.

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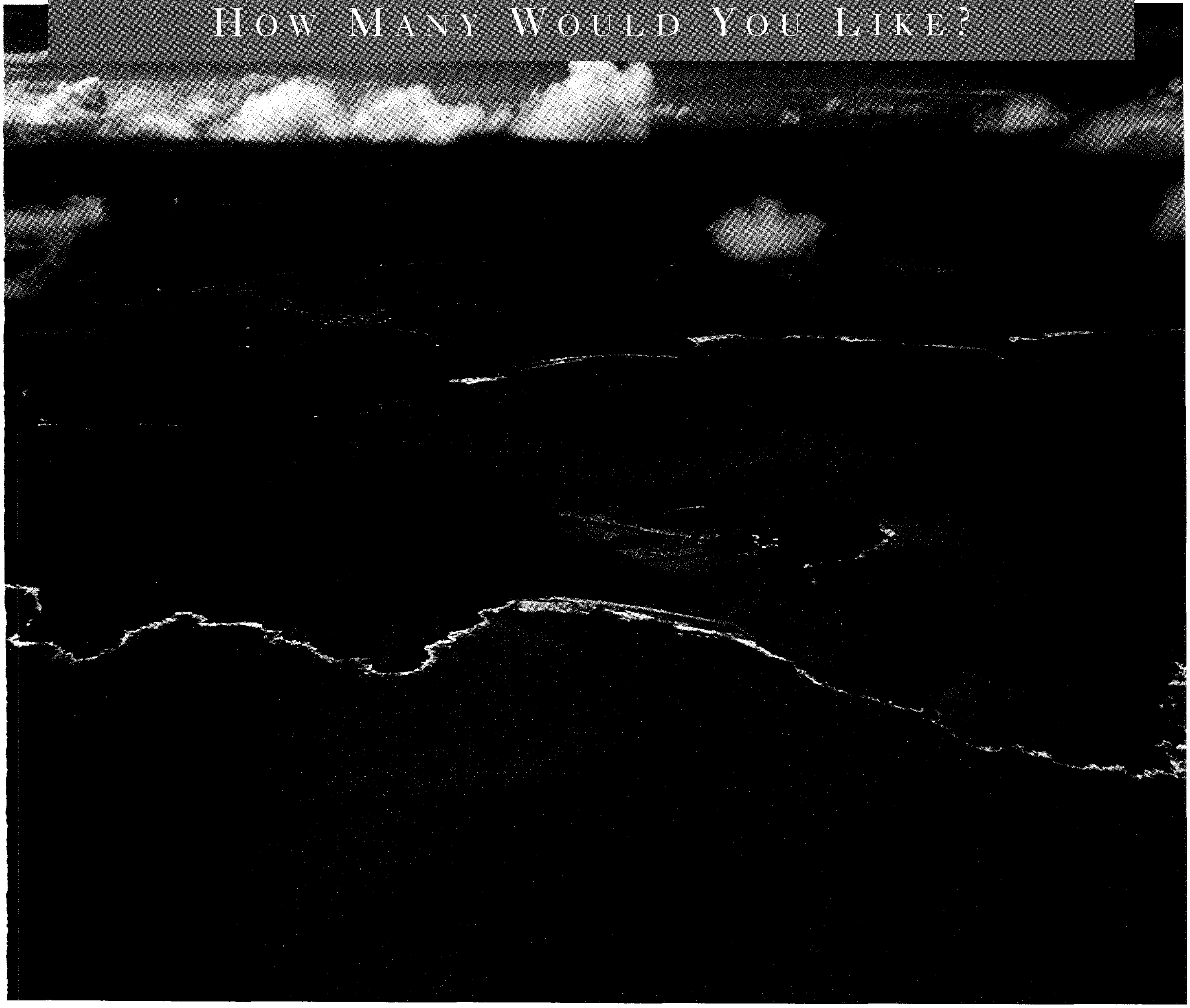

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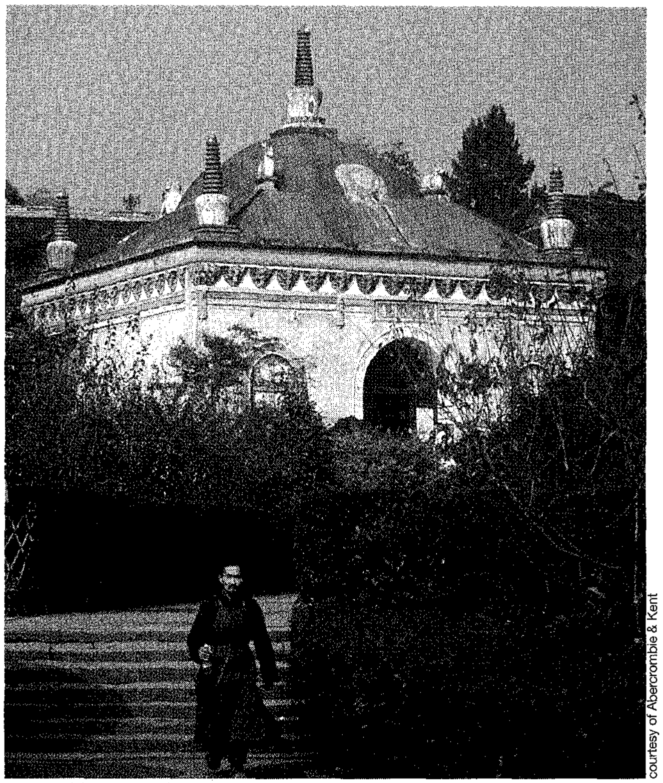
highlights are a dinner atop China's Great Wall, a walk through the Taj Mahal, a private reception with the Maharaja of Jaipur, and finally, chilling out in style at Paris's refurbished Four Seasons George V and a lunch with the city's mayor.

The lucky passengers on Travcoa's around-the-world private jet (October 1–26, $49,900 per person; 800-992-2003) travel on a wide-body 1011 that stops off at some pretty remote places. The trip includes Angkor Wat and Phnom Penh in Cambodia, the Eden-like Praslin Island in the Seychelles off the east coast of Africa, Durban and the Zulu country of Shakaland in South Africa, the skyscrapers-and-sand Persian Gulf city of Dubai, and the Maltese Islands in the Mediterranean. The trip culminates in Dublin, currently on a roll with chic boutique hotels and restaurants.



courtesy of Abercrombie & Kent

NATIONAL WORLD HERITAGE SITE. Located in the Sichuan Province, archaeological evidence suggests the Mt. Emei area was inhabited 10,000 years ago.

Oenophiles take note: A&K's "Great Vineyards of the World by Private Jet" (October 17–November 10, $59,500; 800-323-7308) follows the wine harvest around the world on a ninety-six passenger 747 with first-class sleeper seats. It's California's Napa Valley to New Zealand's Waiheke to Australia's Hunter Valley, followed by South African wine country near Cape Town, Château Rothschild in Bordeaux, France and—after all those tastings and candlelit dinners in cellars or manor houses—Brolio in Italy's Chianti region.

Or, if you want to reinvent the globe in a way that will make your friends demand an in-depth debriefing, there's The World, ResidenSea's nineteen-knot floating apartment house that will begin cruising the world next January.

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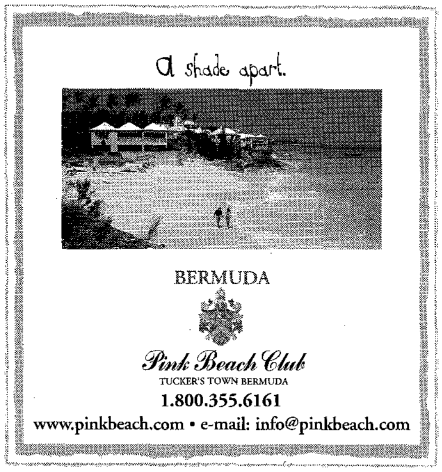
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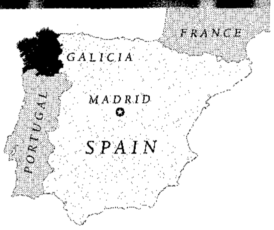

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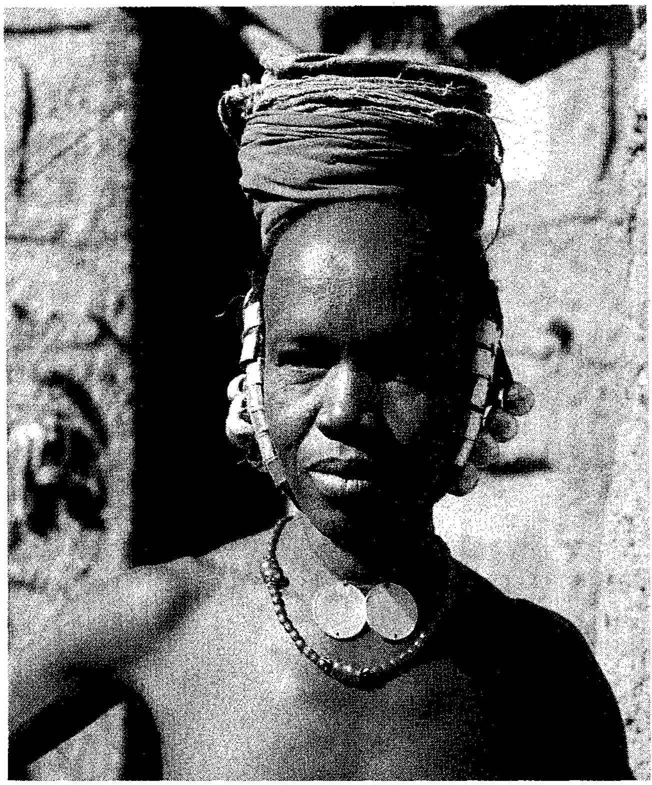
GROUND BREAKERS

Some may wish to slow down for an in-depth examination of vanishing cultures. You can make a good start in northeast Mali (formerly the French Sudan) where the jewelry and indigo-dyed clothing fashioned by the Tuaregs, "the blue men of the desert," are marvelous to behold. But the mind-blowing sight is a two-hour drive eastward to Dogon Country, a nearly lost civilization of some hundred thousand Africans who live in several dozen villages tucked away in a ninety-mile stretch of craggy, reddish-hued palisades. Called the Falaise de Bandiagara or Bandiagara Escarpment, it is now a UNESCO World Heritage site.



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ENIGMATIC MALI TRIBE.
Scientist Carl Sagan once said that the Dogons could not have acquired their knowledge of astronomy without contact with an advanced civilization.

Dogon legend has it that they came to the area to escape their Muslim enemies, perhaps as long ago as the fourteenth century. The tribe has steadfastly sought to maintain its animist culture, which syncretises a complex mythology and astronomy in a curious manner. (The Dogons believe, in fact, that they come from Sirius B, a star not seen, even by telescope, until 1970.)

Their farm communities (mostly millet) are infused with spirits at every turn. The villagers revere the number eight because of the eight children born of the first man and woman in their version of the origin of humankind. Dogons worship ancestral figures such as the crocodile, hyena, frog, lizard, and tortoise and depict them in their artwork. They bury their dead in pink sandstone cliff caves along with household paraphernalia and food for the afterlife, just like the Egyptians once did.

The best time to visit is December through February when

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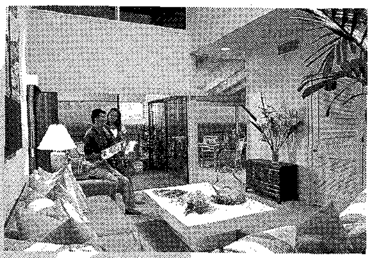

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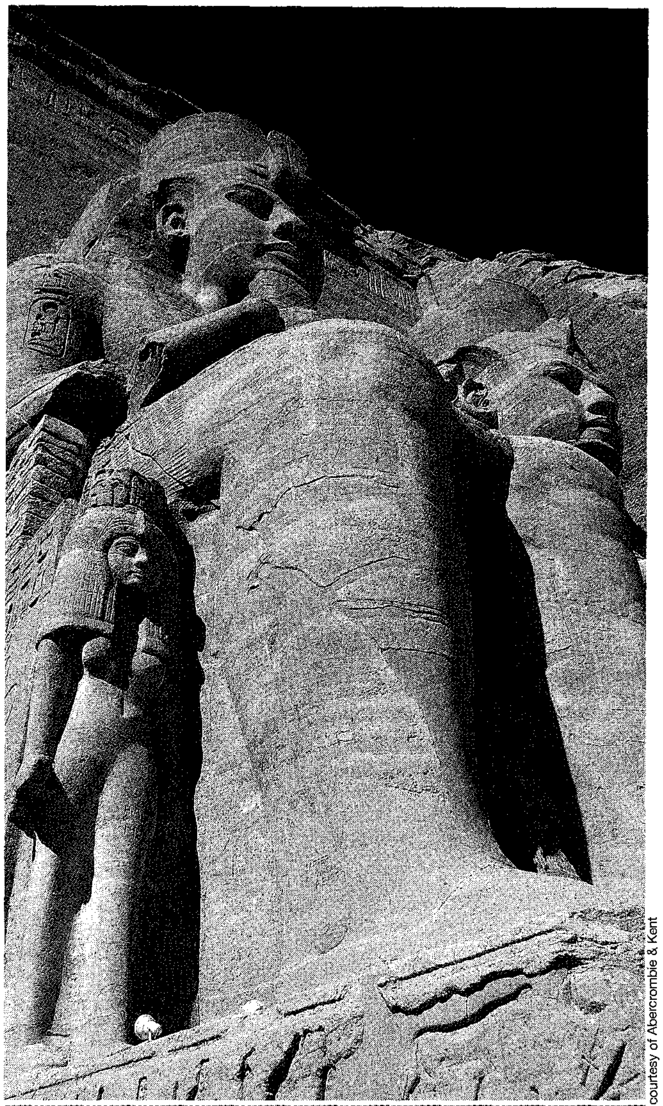
temperatures range from about fifty-five to ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit. There is a striking lodge at Le Kambary with beehive-shaped rooms that is located in Bandiagara, a town above the cliffs. (Bambara Tours, thirteen-day land tour, $3,100; 877-GO-2-MALI).

DIGGING IN

Uncovering buried cities is as popular with some travellers as viewing the rituals of remote tribes. "There's a burst of interest in archaeology, conservation, and restoration worldwide," says senior editor and world traveller Angela M. H. Schuster of *Archaeology*, a bimonthly magazine for both academics and the curious. "In Egypt, for instance, excavations quickly evolve from discovery to public accessibility—often in just a year's time. And there are tons of tour operators who can take you to the sites, whether it's the pyramids, the Greek Isles, or the Turkish coast."



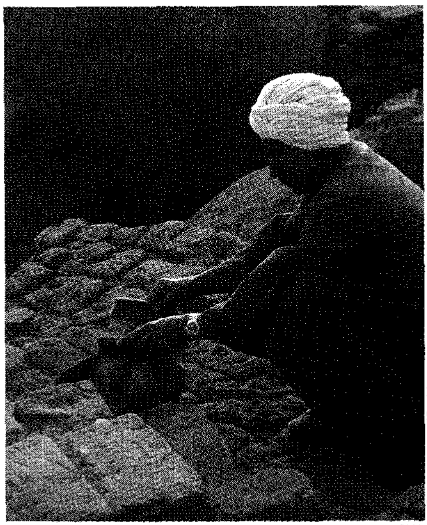
courtesy of Abercrombie & Kent

GRANDEUR, ASWAN STYLE. Carved into a sandstone cliff, the Great Temple of Abu Simbel on the Nile pays homage to Pharaoh Ramses II.

What's new is that you can participate in some of the excavations by signing on as a volunteer, and sometimes even earn modest pay for your work. But be aware that certain countries like Egypt don't permit volunteers at sites unless they're university-sanctioned.

Not all of the digs offer instant gratification. "When you see an Indiana Jones movie," says Schuster, "remember that they edit out the ten laborious years of digging that it takes to get from one color of soil to another." But the archaeologically smitten generally need no encouragement to head for a new site, restored or just discovered. Here's Schuster's off-the-cuff, around-the-globe survey:

- East Africa is currently the hottest spot for fresh discoveries. There's a lot of work going on in Ethiopia at Axum, the first seat of the Axumite Empire dating to the second century B.C. At Sterkfontein in South Africa, paleontologists are reviving earlier efforts to trace the origins of humankind.
- In Latin America, archaeologists in search of Mayan ruins have found only about forty per cent of what's out there. What's left is mostly in Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize.
- In Peru, best known for the Inca ruins at Machu Picchu, there's been a recent discovery of a site, Dos Cabezas (two heads), near Sipan. These Pre-Incan Moche people (circa 200 to 800 A.D.) buried their deceased nobility in richly appointed pyramidal tombs. At Batan Grande, along Peru's north coast, work is going on to explore the Chimu and Sican cultures.
- In Australia, thrust into prime-time focus by TV's "Survivor II," Kakadu National Park has a lot of aboriginal rock art. "There's a fight underway in academic circles over the dates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DEEP SECRETS. An archaeological excavation to expose the ancient Elephantine City in Egypt.

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when people first inhabited Australia," says Schuster. The current working date is 60,000 B.C. Regardless, you'll need to get a permit to visit the rock art sites. *(See "Resource Guide.")*

KITCHEN DETAIL

With fabulous travel and gourmet food inextricably wedded, more and more vacationers are spending a few days at a foreign cooking school. Of exotic cuisines, ranging from Indian to Japanese, the most popular is Thai. But most aspiring chefs on vacation want to go Italian. Why? "It's a combination of factors," says Dorlene Kaplan, editor of education-oriented ShawGuides Web site. "The ingredients are familiar and the cuisine is viewed as healthy and not as complex as French or as exotic as Far Eastern. There's also a feeling that anybody can learn to cook Italian."

Italy is chockablock full of cooking schools, particularly in fashionable Tuscany. But a standout is the one-week course given by cookbook author Guiliano Bugialli just outside Florence. Classes are held in an ancient villa in Chianti wine country ($3,600, double-occupancy, hotel included; www.bugialli.com).

courtesy of Abercrombie & Kent

MARKET DAY IN SHANGRI-LA. In the ancient village of Lijiang, cobblestone footpaths and alleys give way to markets selling all sorts of produce.

France has many year-round options. In Paris, two are Le Cordon Bleu's school near the Eiffel Tower (about $650, four-day course; www.cordonbleu.net) and Ecole Ritz Escoffier in the estimable Ritz Hotel (about $440, three-day course; 800-457-CHEF). If you like to browse in regional markets, retreat to Provence where you can soak up the wisdom of cookbook author and reviewer Patricia Wells in her eighteenth-century

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farmhouse kitchen, some thirty miles northeast of Avignon ($3,000, five-day course, lodging extra; www.patriciawells.com).

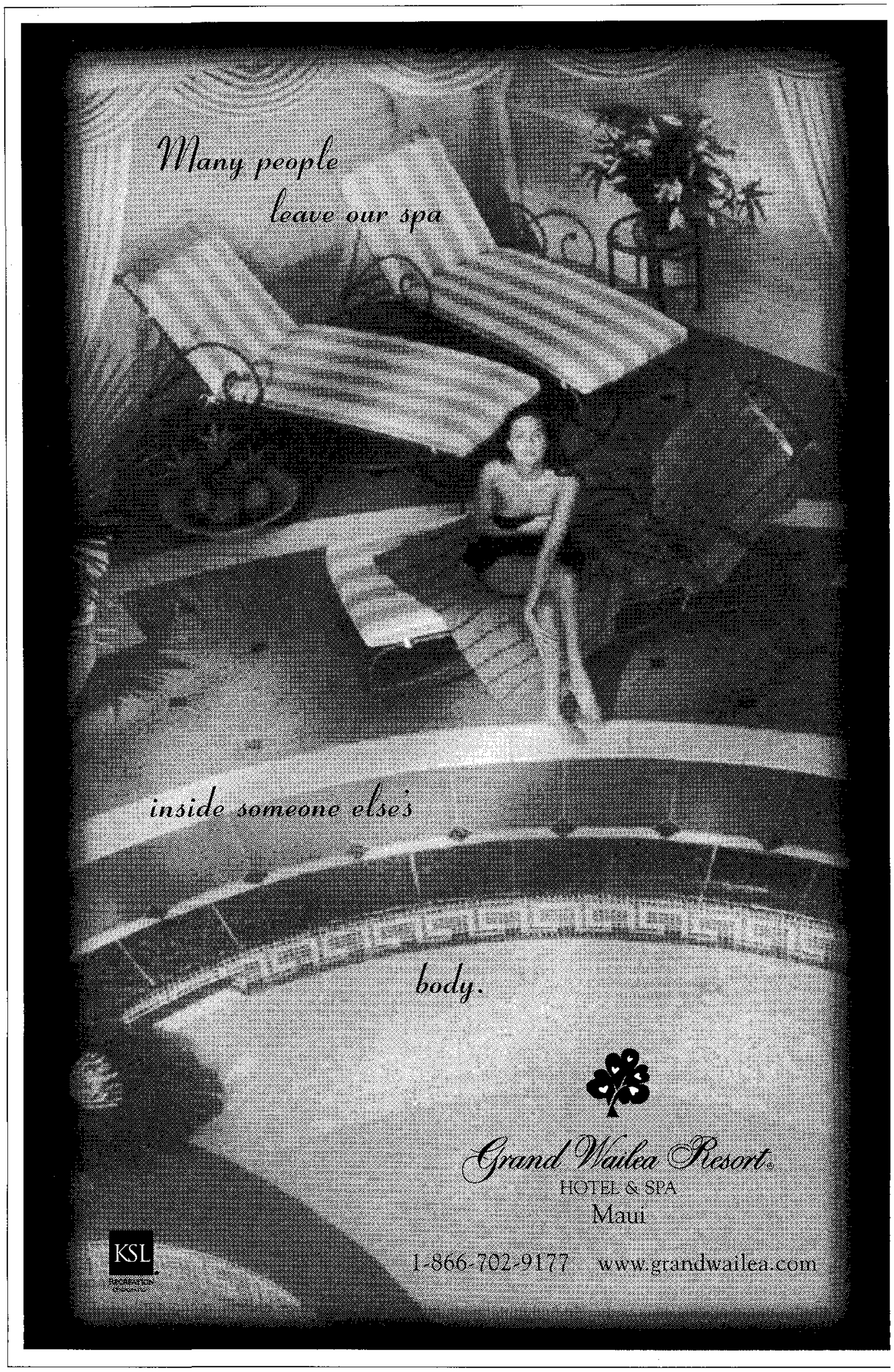
With the new burst of interest in Turkish culture and cuisine, many are signing up for "Culinary Expeditions in Turkey," which includes regional, historic, and Ottoman Istanbul cuisines along with visits to archaeological sites ($2,100, nine-day course, covers lodging and meals; www.evocative.com/~turkey/tour.html).

A more leisurely route to toquehood is to avail yourself of cooking courses at hotels and resorts. In Singapore, a city-state rich with diverse cuisines to sample both in its restaurants and hawker stalls, the year-round Raffles Culinary Academy teaches travellers in the famous Raffles Hotel, which gave birth to the Singapore Sling ($60-$100 per class; www.raffleshotel.com).

In Thailand, the cooking school of choice is at the top-rated Oriental Hotel in Bangkok, which fronts on the bustling Chao Phraya River. The four-day course, limited to fifteen per class, also helps to demystify the art of creating (and reading) Thai menus ($1,788, lodging and most meals included; 800-526-6566).

At Hong Kong's venerable Peninsula, rated the world's best hotel by Zagat survey participants, you can learn to cook dim sum as part of a guest package called the "Chinese Cultural Experience." Included in the three-night, four-day experience package are a tai-chi lesson, the ancient art of brush-writing, a feng-shui session, the art of tea making, a trip to seldom seen food markets, and the philosophy of herbal medicine (about $1,500; www.peninsula.com).

In the Canadian Rockies, set against the magnificent backdrop of the Victoria Glacier, the Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise is serving up its third annual Canadian Wine and Food Festival (May 1–13). You'll sample fine estate wines from Okanaga and Niagara, learn about the harmony of science and art in the making of fine wines, and discover the world of market-fresh cuisine prepared by the executive chef (800-866-5577).



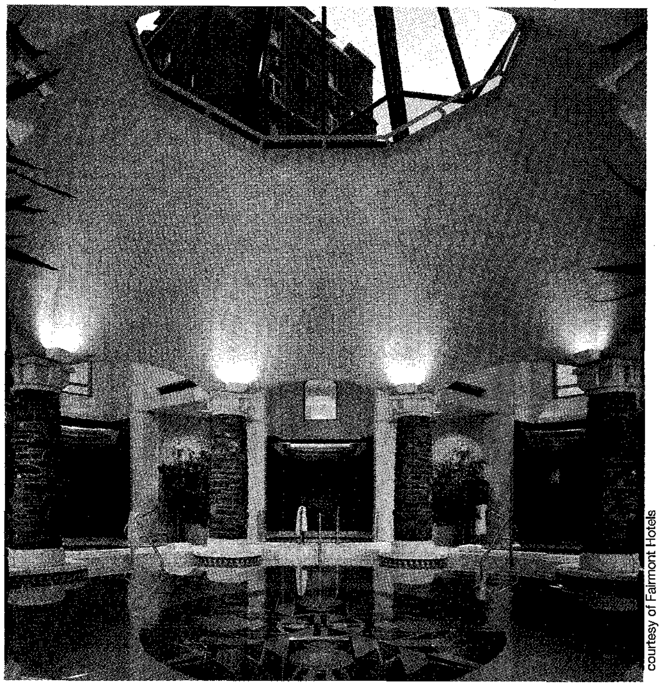
SPA FEVER

These days it's as important to enrich your body as it is to fill your knowledge bank. Spas have moved from ordinary massage-and-treatment enclaves to extraordinary centers of self-improvement and well-being.

New destination spas have taken on the mantle of resorts, with prices from roughly $1,000 for a day or two to more than $5,000 for a week's pampering. And the old "Marine boot camp" spa image has put on a pair of soft shades. Spas nowadays are a constructive diversion rather than a disciplinary chore.

There's arguably no better exemplar of such spas than Santa Barbara's ultra-luxurious Bacara Resort & Spa. Set on seventy-eight acres of bluffs and beaches between the Pacific and the Santa Ynez Mountains, a guest can enjoy the assistance of a personal spa concierge (877-422-3533).

Tucson's ranch-style Miraval Life in Balance resort and spa (800-232-3969) considers interacting with horses part of the regimen for developing "mindfulness"—greater attentiveness and sensitivity. As Stephanie Matolyak, a *Spa Finder* executive puts it: "How a horse reacts to your commands mirrors how you communicate with others in your life."



courtesy of Fairmont Hotels

FINDING YOUR CENTER. Fairmont Banff Springs in Alberta boasts the Solace Spa that promises to leave guests renewed.

Outside Paris in Versailles, on the edge of Louis XIV's park, travellers can book two nights (minimum stay) at the spa in Le Trianon. The spa menu features advanced French formulas "to prevent premature aging of the skin and reduce the harmful effects of stress" (888-624-5144).

Near Jaipur in India, Oberoi's smooth-as-silk Rajvilas hotel spices up its regal surroundings with an ethereal spa that includes ayurvedic as well as western relaxation and beauty treatments. Before a breakfast buffet of exotic fruits, pastries, and condiments,

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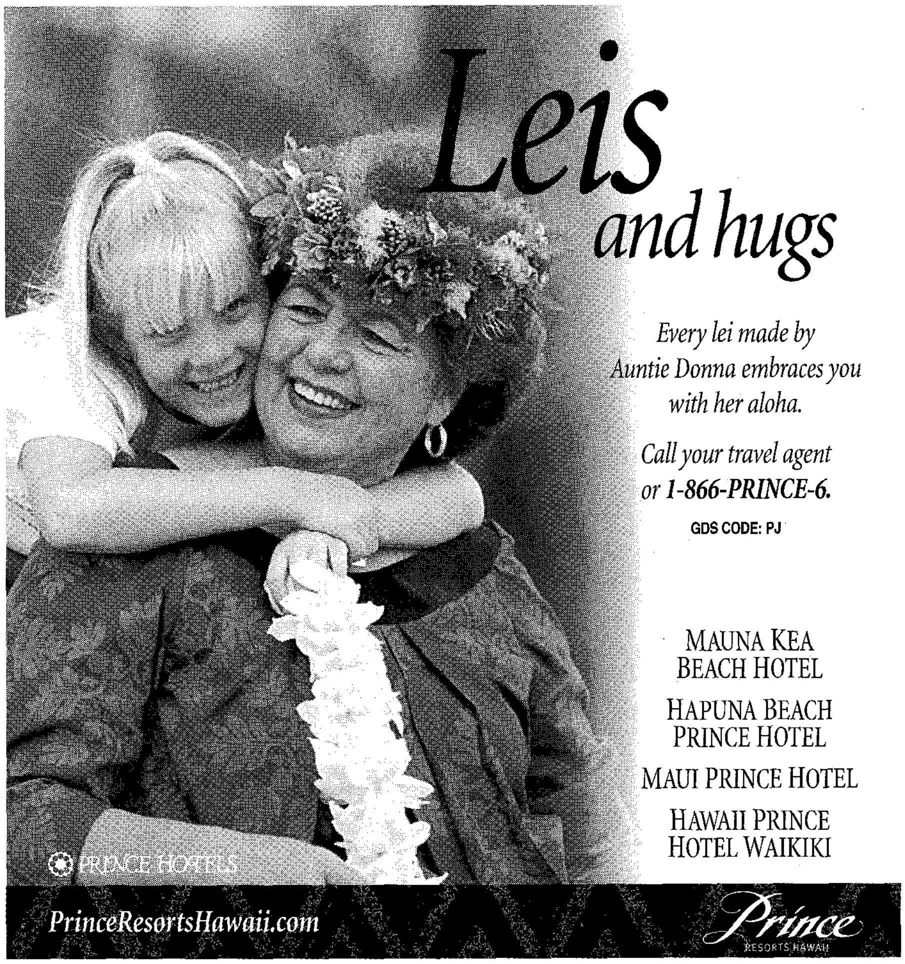
Mountain climbers, hikers, horseback riders, and other outdoor buffs love the craggy setting of the historic Fairmont Banff Springs in Banff, Alberta. But now that the resort boasts Solace, a state-of-the-art spa, many guests are spending hours indoors, wringing out tension in a trio of cascading waterfall massage pools. (There's also a heated outdoor pool for those who favor the bracing mountain air.) The twelve-million-dollar spa may be the finest spa in Canada and it's certainly one of the finest in North America. Solace's panoply of services and treatments include Swedish and shiatsu massages, fango mud and deep-cleansing facials, Turkish scrubs, and mineral baths from Krauter to aromatic. The contrast between the spa's serenity and the Rockies scenery is stunning. A deluxe four-day ultimate retreat package provides a comprehensive spa experience (800-404-1772, Ext. 1714).

The Spa Grande is Hawaii's mega-spa—50,000 square feet (more than an acre) of marble, mahogany millwork, Venetian chandeliers, and artwork at the Grand Wailea Resort Hotel & Spa on Maui. You name the massage—acupressure, aromatherapy, Hawaiian, *lomi-lomi*, shiatsu, reiki, Swedish—and it's yours for the asking. Facials come in a dozen flavors, from European deep cleansing to Vitamin C. To nourish your skin, there's a seaweed body masque, an alii honey steam wrap, a Hawaiian salt glo, and a siddha sandalwood wrap. Move on to ayurvedic and siddha oil applications that purport to open the spiritual channels of the body (*chakras*), stimulate the immune system, tone skin and muscles, and eliminate impurities. Do treadmills and stair climbers seem passé after all this? Never mind. Spa Grande has them too (866-702-9177).

Whether abroad or closer to home, the big change in travel these days is the way you can bypass depersonalized sight-seeing and cultivate a relationship between what you see and what you learn. One of the beneficial consequences of globalization is the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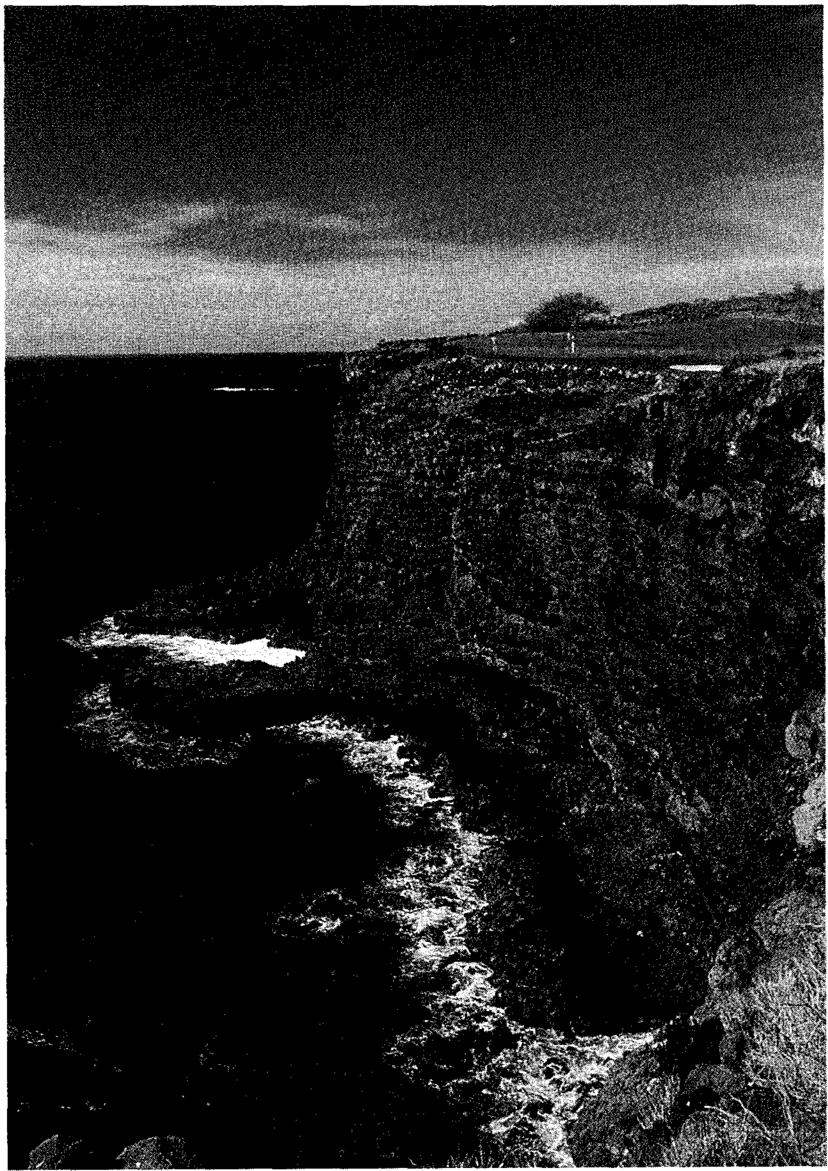
courtesy of Lanai Resorts

THE CHALLENGE AT MANELE. Built on acres of lava outcroppings, every hole on this Hawaiian Par 72 golf course features an ocean view. Often, it will force players to hit shots directly over the Pacific.

What counts, as indefatigable traveller Evelyn Waugh once wrote, is "the flavor of first-hand experiences, unmistakable and intoxicating." Today's enrichment-travel players have plenty to write home about. And their experiences will likely leave them feeling as different about themselves as they feel about the world around them.

(Paul Burnham Finney is a New York-based travel writer.)

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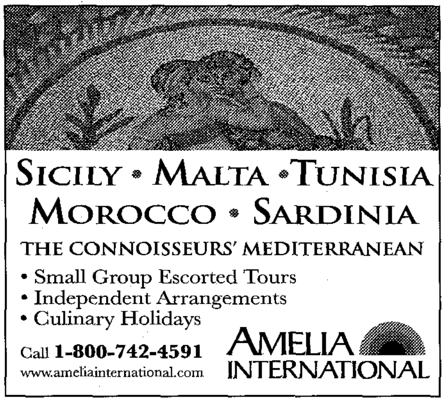
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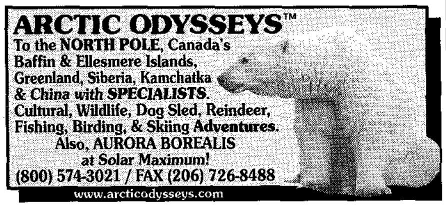
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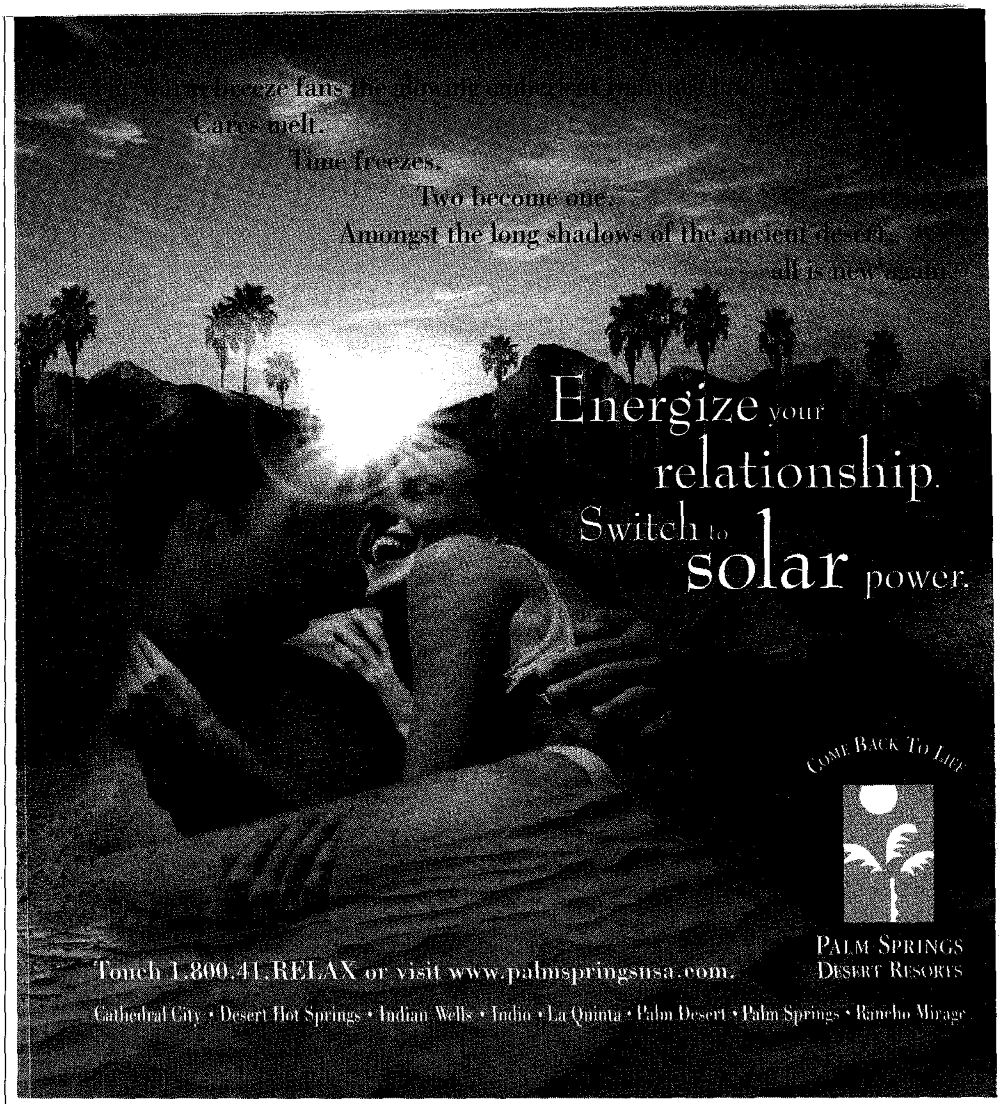
NEWS BRIEFS

by Dan Ouellette

Some travellers equate enrichment with education, others with relaxing. Stay & Visit Italy offers both: a thirteen-day cathedral and art museum tour of **Tuscany**, **Umbria**, and **Rome** and an eight-day spa vacation on **the island of Ischia** at a hotel with twenty outdoor thermal pools! • Randonnée Tours believes that designing your own excursion is in itself enriching. That philosophy also informs its premium European tours, including a **Normandy bicycling trip** with options for longer and shorter spins. • Horizons are broadened by TravLtips Cruise & Freighter Travel Association, which now offers a **Moscow to St. Peterburg river cruise** focusing on Russian history and culture. • Already been to **China** but want more? Whether it's exploring the Beijing pop music scene or viewing pandas in the wild, Aaron Travel arranges escorted trips that pinpoint your personal interests. • Lock in a week in Hawaii at Kapalua Villas for the twentieth annual **Kapalua Wine & Food Festival** (July 5–9) to enjoy tastings, food and wine pairings, cook-offs, a seafood feast, and golf at the Kapalua Bay Hotel and Ritz-Carlton Kapalua. • **Florida's full-service spa** at Amelia Island Plantation, footsteps from the beach, opens on June 1st. Underwater jet massage and seaweed wraps await. • Cobblestone Small Group Tours' popular Spain trip explores **Barcelona's art** (Gaudí, Dalí, Miró, and Picasso were residents) and **Bilbao's architecture** (including the Frank Gehry-designed Guggenheim Museum). • Into the exotic? **Bhutan**, a tiny Himalayan kingdom, boasts stunning natural beauty and a rich cultural heritage. Cox & Kings' ten-day tours provide an overview of Bhutanese art

(continued)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RESOURCE GUIDE

Create your own tailor-made trip by browsing through a few authoritative sources and then letting a travel agent handle the details.

Archaeological Fieldwork Opportunities Bulletin An annual periodical published by the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) that lists dig sites and provides other details ($15.25 for non-members; 800-228-0810).

The Guide to Cooking Schools A book version of ShawGuide's electronic directory, which includes 157 pages on "recreational" schools from Australia to Spain, with emphasis on France and Italy ($22.95 paperback).

The Hideaway Report A monthly tip sheet on superior resorts, lodges, and unspoiled places worldwide. (Box 300, Whitefish, MT 59937, $135 per year; www.andrewharpertravel.com).

Spa Finder A leading spa reservation service with information and advice to help you locate a spa that suits your needs. Provides a listing of some six hundred day-visit and destination spas world-wide by type (luxury, resort, wellness, holistic), and a glossy quarterly, *Spa Finder*, with an annual directory in the spring issue (800-ALL-SPAS).

www.educated-traveller.com A spin-off site from PBS's series "The Educated Traveller." You can search by interest, destination, departure date, and touring organization (Audubon Society, Smithsonian Institution, etc.).

www.shawguides.com A comprehensive listing of more than 4,300 learning vacations worldwide, from archaeology-and architecture-centered trips to language, science, and writers' workshops. The site's high-performance link covers everything from auto racing to spelunking.

Zagat Survey Authoritative guide to the top international hotels, resorts, and spas based on the evaluations of some twelve thousand international travellers. Provides useful indices and covers the hotels, resorts, inns, lodges, and spas along with Web sites and 800 numbers ($12.95; 800-333-3421).

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(NEWS BRIEFS *continued*)

and include visits to Buddhist monasteries. • Clients of Elite International receive custom-designed itineraries and personal guide/interpreters for an insider's view of **Japan**. Chaperoned tours include cosmopolitan **Kobe**, cultural **Kyoto**, **Nagano** (home of Zenkoji Temple), and **Takayama** (an ancient crafts village). • Far from the clamor of crowds, Whalers Cove is a thirty-nine-condo hideaway on **Kauai's south coast**. It's close to the beaches of Poipu and historic Koloa Town that captures the spirit of Hawaii's plantation past. • Europe by Car reminds travellers that such sites as the **Pont du Gard aqueduct** in southern France and **the Dolomites** mountain range in northern Italy aren't accessible by train. Car leasing and rental discounts are available to faculty and students in summer study programs. • Ready for remote lodging? Arctic Odysseys offers a November 3–8 small-group excursion to the **polar bear capital of the world** in the Cape Churchill region of Manitoba. • Couples unwind and get back in tune

courtesy of Abercrombie & Kent

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE.
The palace in Lima adjoins a cathedral said to contain the remains of Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro.

with synchronized massages, a tub-for-two Jacuzzi soak, and a bottle of bubbly at the new Heaven for Two spa in Jamaica's Montego Bay's Half Moon Golf, Tennis & Beach Club. • A pioneer in cultural travel, TunisUSA's in-depth historical exploration of **Tunisia**, "Phoenicians to Berbers," takes place only once this year from October 12–23. • Swim with giant tortoises and learn the "true love" dance of the blue-footed booby. INCA (International Nature and Cultural Adventures) offers trips to the **Galápagos Islands'** protected wildlife sanctuary that emphasize natural history and the environment. • First European Cruises launches the new 1500-passenger **European Vision** on June 30th. Through mid-November, the resort-style ship will depart from Marseilles or Genoa every week, with stopovers in Greece, Turkey, and Italy. • Palm Springs Desert Resorts is spa central thanks to its abundance of natural mineral hot springs. But it also offers film buffs **The Palm Springs International Festival of Short Films** (August 7–13), the largest in North America, and the **Nortel Palm Springs International Film Festival** (January 10–21). • The fares of KD River Cruises of Europe include the cost of cultural shore excursions. The shipping line has thirty-two itineraries with more than 330 departures, including an eight-day **Danube River voyage** from Budapest to Nuremberg. • Bettoja Hotels owns five properties in close proximity to **Rome's Coliseum**, **Opera House**, as well as Termini Station—the newly restored rail terminal that doubles as an Italian piazza with shops, cafés, and an archeological museum. • Whether your destination is the **North Pole** (August), **Saudi Arabia** (October), or **Cuba** (December), travel consultants at Peter Voll Associates supply scholars and experts who bring educational expertise to the group-tour experience. • Senior Women's Travel charts a course for the Mediterranean island of **Malta** (June 21–18) to visit ancient ruins and archeological sites. Guests partake in a Maltese cooking class and enjoy a festival in honor of a patron saint. • At **Bermuda's** Pink Beach Club & Cottages, even the sand is pink coral. Indulge in a variety of spa services supplied to your cottage, then visit top cultural attractions with the Heritage Passport (newly available for purchase at the resort). • The Scottish Tourist Board heralds the arrival of the new **Glasgow Science Centre**. Opening this month, it will house the country's first IMAX theatre, its largest planetarium, and four floors of exhibits. • Unplug your computer. Refresh yourself (not your screen). Save stress to memory. Seacoast Homes & Villas Rentals will find you a vacation home base on **Hilton Head Island** in South Carolina. Then it's off to the beach, links, and spas. • Geared to serious not casual travellers, Turkana Odyssey's twenty-one-day spring and fall trips (May 23–June 15; September 17–October 8) provide an **insider's view of Turkey**. • The Wayfarers' walking and cooking vacation in Provence (September 30–October 6) combines hikes in the sun-splashed countryside, strolls through fresh produce markets, and hands-on instruction in creating French gastronomic delights. • The Benjamin, a luxury suite hotel in **Midtown Manhattan**, is planning a weekend getaway (sans kids) that features a discounted spa treatment at its Woodstock Spa & Wellness Center and brunch at Chef Larry Forgione's An American Place. • World of Oz offers its ever popular Crossroads of Civilization tour of Turkey as well as a scholar-led **Eastern Turkey and Black Sea adventure**. • Mediterranean Odyssey is Amelia International's new seventeen-day tour to **Sardinia**, **Malta**, and **Tunisia** that includes visits to ancient ruins and archeology sites. • Bibliophiles alert: World Explorer Cruises has **the largest library afloat** (some sixteen thousand volumes on its Universe Explorer). So you can curl up with a Jack London if you hit fog on the way to **Alaska** or a downpour while navigating the **Panama Canal**. • The strains of steel pan are issuing from the Agave Terrace restaurant at Point Pleasant Resort on the **U.S.V.I.'s St. Thomas**. Local bands are featured twice weekly, buoying the spirits of guests. • Put your boots on, pardner. On July 5th and 6th, a cattle drive with three hundred steer, thirty seasoned wranglers, and a wagon train will take place at the **Laramie Jubilee Days celebration** (July 4–15) sponsored by Wyoming's Albany County Tourism. Join the dogie roundup on horseback or via wagon. • Laurance S. Rockefeller described the resort he built in 1965 on the **Kohala Coast of the island of Hawaii** as "a private estate offering a cross-cultural experience." Now, it's Prince's Mauna Kea Resort with a priceless collection of 1,600 Asian and Pacific statues, paintings, and native crafts. • Allow time during your visit to **Manhattan's** aristocratic Peninsula Hotel (Fifth Avenue and 55th) to immerse yourself in its acclaimed **duplex spa**, where the treatments are as spectacular as the views of gotham's fabulous skyline.

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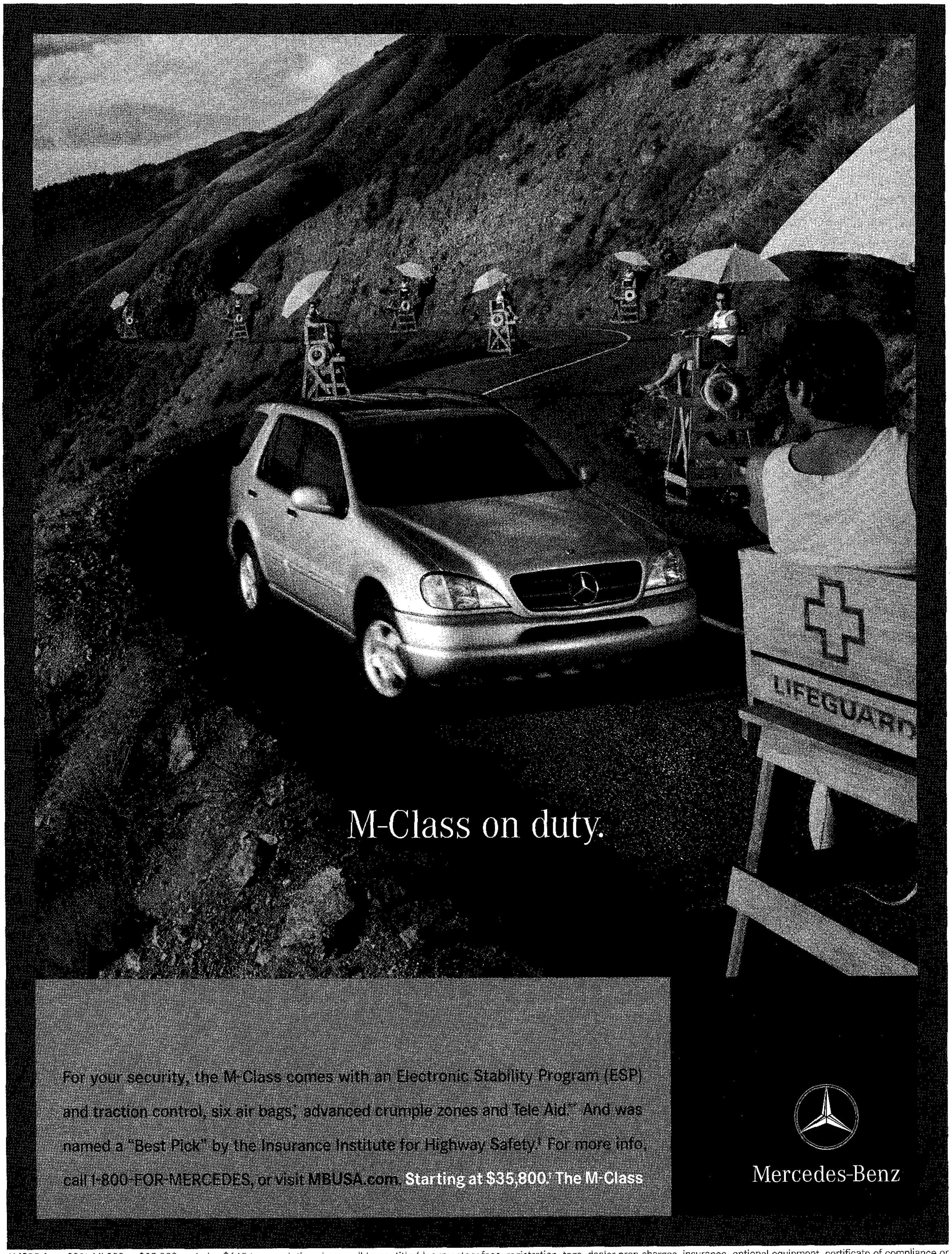

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PERSONAL HISTORY

TIME ON THE STREET

He gave himself ten years to get the money. But holding out was hard.

BY SCOTT LASSER

It's early October, and at 7:10 A.M. someone starts killing the July 22 Treasury bill. I am a Treasury-bill trader, and I can't understand why this is happening. For the last six weeks, there have been buyers of bills everywhere. At one-thirty this morning, I sold two hundred million dollars' worth of three-month bills to a Japanese account from my bed. At 5:40 A.M., just as I was leaving my house for work, I got a call from London, and sold two hundred and fifty million six-month bills to a Dutch account. The globe is experiencing a financial panic, and in a panic everyone wants to buy Treasury bills. Except, apparently, the July 22 bill.

I watch as five hundred of these bills trade at very cheap prices, and then step in and buy a couple of hundred for myself. (Treasury traders rarely say "million," or "million dollars"; it's understood.) I figure there can't be many more for sale. I enter the trade into my Sun workstation and wonder who the seller is. There are maybe half a dozen traders who could drop three-quarters of a billion July 22 bills on the market before the office coffee is brewed, and on this morning I think I know who it is. It's my friend Josh, a guy at a "big shop." (Names have been changed.) The big shops are the large primary dealers, like Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs, and my firm, Lehman Brothers. Their Treasury traders often execute trades through inter-dealer brokers, who "flash" these trades on a screen and are thus called screen brokers. Treasury traders spend their lives studying these screens and trading on them. No name is ever given in a screen trade, but I know certain people's styles and can sometimes figure out who is involved.

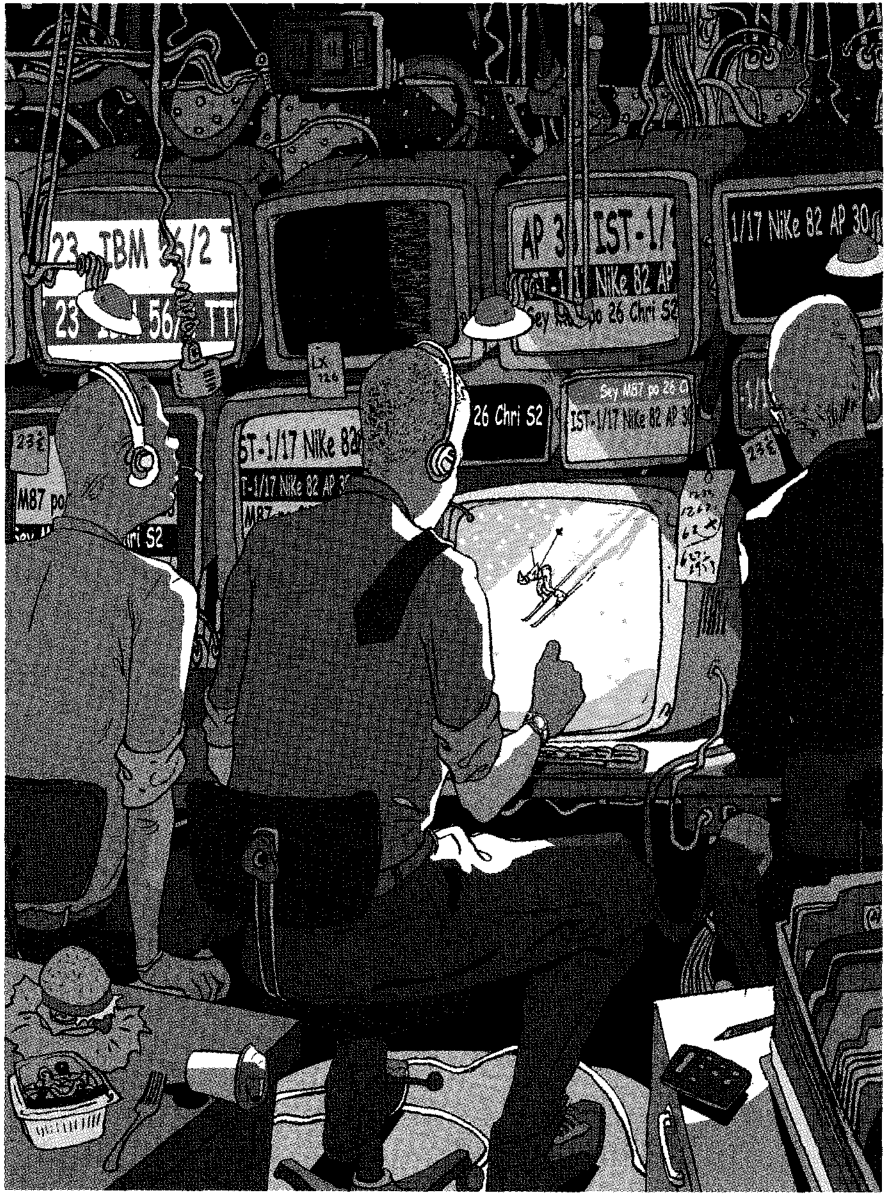
I call Josh and ask, "Is this you murdering the July 22 bill?"

"Dude," he says in a drawl part surfer and part Southern, "I got these things to go."

A hedge fund has sold him a billion and a half July 22 bills. What's worse, I soon learn that the fund has more to sell. I have been foolish to buy the bill. This is not, as I'd thought, a case of a T-bill getting a little undervalued: it's liquidation on a large scale.

I start to sweat. Usually, I don't sweat until late morning, when the heat from the computers starts to overwhelm the building's cooling system. On the floor, traders sit shoulder-to-shoulder, hunched in front of computer screens, stacks of them: even when I stand up I cannot see the person who sits opposite me. Each of these screens gives off a lot of heat; our ten-year-note trader uses one to warm his morning Pop-Tarts. Traders respond to the heat by employing fans, though often the only space available for a fan is under the desk, where it is called a "ball fan."

I am a short-term trader, holding bills for a minute or two, sometimes a few seconds or a couple of days, and almost never more than two weeks. I want out, but merely selling what I've bought is impossible, so I hedge the position and the next day sneak out of



Every trader has a number: the amount you need in the bank to walk away.

ISTVAN BANYAI

the trade even. Several weeks later, the hedge fund can't meet its margin requirements, and it folds.

Treasury-bill trading is a mean and scrappy business. My phone board beeps to let me know a salesman is looking for me. He's sitting in the next row, twenty feet away, with his customer, a mutual fund, on one phone and me on another. "Scott," he asks, "where can you offer XYZ Fund five hundred million six-month bills?"

This means the fund wants to buy, and it's my job to put a price on the trade. For every security, I have two prices: the bid price, at which I will buy, and the offer price, at which I will sell. The difference between them is called the bid-offer spread. The bid-offer spread is like the difference between wholesale and retail, but, unlike at the Gap, say, the prices of my goods fluctuate on a second-by-second basis, and, as in this case, I may not own what I'm selling. This is called being short.

I give the salesman my price, and he says, "You're done." That's it. A five-hundred-million-dollar transaction.

But now the word's on the street that I need five hundred million six-month bills—and lots of traders have rushed in to buy them up, figuring that they can sell them to me at a profit. As these buyers drive up the price, I lose money: I've sold bonds at a price lower than I'm now going to have to pay to get them. I pound my fist down on the Formica desktop, but taking losses is part of the job.

Five hundred million is a big trade, and I've provided liquidity to a large mutual fund. On a typical Treasury-bill trade, how much is the bid-offer spread? Five thousand dollars per million? A grand? The answer is twenty-five dollars. Twenty-five dollars! Six minutes have passed since I first received the inquiry. I move on to the next trade.

About a week after the July 22 bill trade, Josh and I go out to dinner with two of our brokers. Trading is fairly impersonal, and going out gives me a chance to meet the other guys in the market. Besides, you never know when you're going to need help finding a job. The brokers are there to provide the introductions and, more important, to pick up the tab.

The night of the dinner is clear and cold, something I notice as I leave Lehman's offices at the World Financial Center and cross Vesey Street to a broker-provided Lincoln Town Car. Ordinarily, I commute by car pool with two other traders. We park in the basement of the building, so we don't go outside even when we arrive. I eat lunch at my desk, if I can find the time. There are no windows nearby, and therefore I rarely have any idea of the weather. Now that it's late in the year, I arrive at work before dawn and leave after dusk.

We meet at a trendy sushi restaurant. If you ever want to feel like an outcast, put on a dark suit and go out to dinner with a couple of traders at six o'clock in SoHo. We're the only suits in the place, and the hostess escorts us to the rear of the room.

Josh is six-one or two, with coal-black hair, black-framed glasses, and a swarthy complexion. "Look, man," he says as we wait for his broker to get the hostess's attention. "I'm telling you, I've never seen markets like these."

Josh's broker has chosen the restaurant. He's a dark-haired man of maybe forty, with a paunch and a wide and ruddy face that comes, I imagine, from a heavy regimen of restaurant food and alcohol. My broker is also a prodigious drinker. I can't help but like him, partly because he's always so grateful for the business I send his way. He's thirty-five and still plays rugby on the weekends. I often spot a scrape on his chin or a swollen cheek; tonight there's a small bruise beside his left eye, and somehow it almost seems to me as if the business were beating him up. We let him do the ordering, and Josh and I chat about work. We know we are living through extraordinary times, and close beneath the surface of the conversation is the fear that our jobs are in jeopardy.

When the second round of drinks arrives, Josh brings the conversation around to "the number." This is the standard destination of such conversations: how much do you need in the bank to walk away? Every trader has a number. You know that you can lose your job at any moment, that each workday takes its toll on body and mind, and that the job prepares you to do nothing else. Your career becomes a race to squirrel away a bundle.

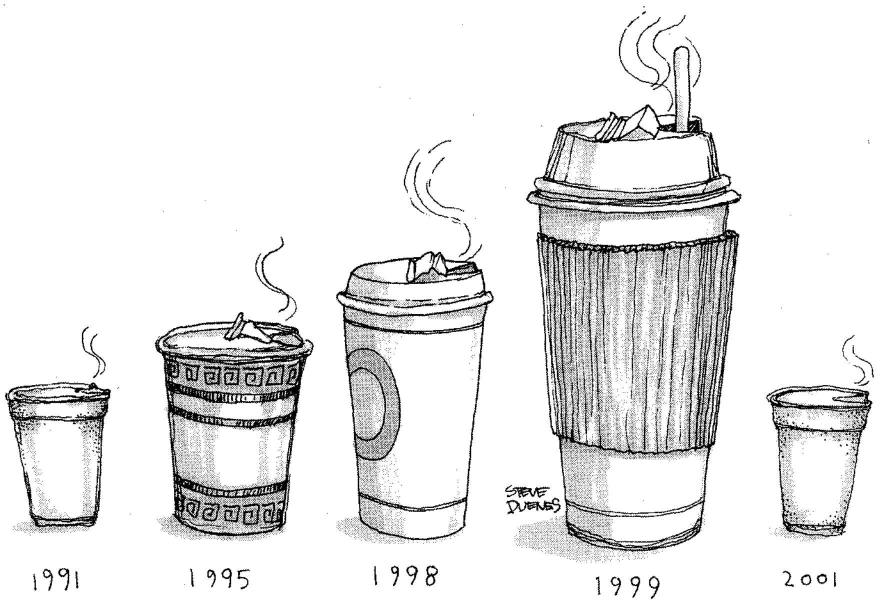
Most guys I've spoken with on the Street come in at around four or five million. I have heard numbers as high as twenty-five. Of course, those successful enough to walk away rarely do so. They buy German cars, boats (one Lehman manager is rumored to own four), airplanes, estates, vacation homes.

"What do you think you need, half a million in the bank?" Josh asks.

A half-million dollars is a laughably small number for a trader, and I know he can't be serious. Even at the rate of ten per cent per year, that's only fifty grand a year, out of which you must pay taxes and reinvest a portion to keep the value of the principal up with inflation. Nobody aims that low.

I tell him a half million is not enough.

He agrees. "But to most people



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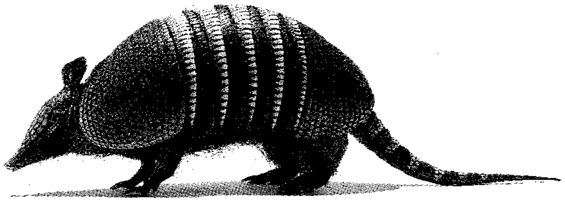

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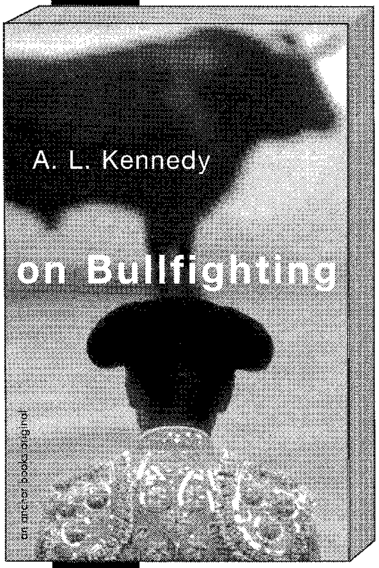

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—*New Yorker*

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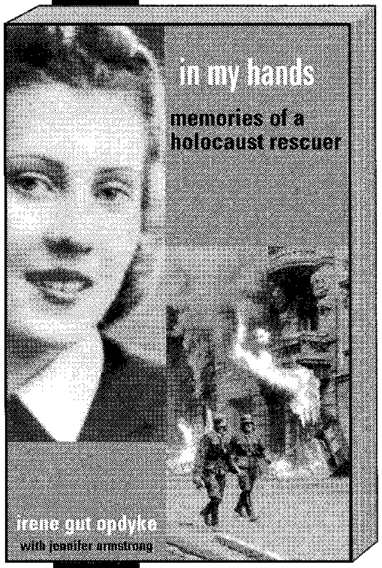

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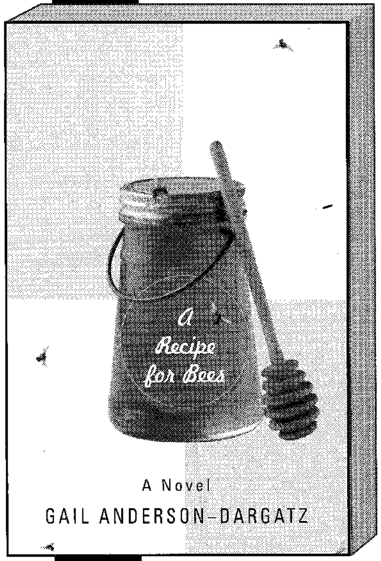
—*Publishers Weekly*, starred and boxed review

A Book Sense 76 Pick



A Recipe for Bees
Gail Anderson-Dargatz

"A wonder worth cherishing: a wise, beautiful, and deeply felt novel."
—Chris Bohjalian, author of *Midwives*

"In language remarkable for its suppleness and unforced simplicity, Anderson-Dargatz delivers both a quirky love story and a serene meditation on endurance and its rich rewards."
—*The Washington Post*

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it's still a lot of money," he adds.

I ask him what he would like to do when he leaves trading.

He adjusts his tie. "I don't know, man, but I'd like it to be something totally different. I just don't know what."

Financial panics are hell on banks. Lehman Brothers stock falls to roughly forty dollars a share, which is about what the company would be worth if you closed it down and sold off its assets. And then things get bad.

Rumors hit the market that Lehman is about to collapse. Investors are demanding six percentage points more than Treasuries to buy Lehman's own corporate bonds. I take a call from a former Lehman trader who now works for a competing firm.

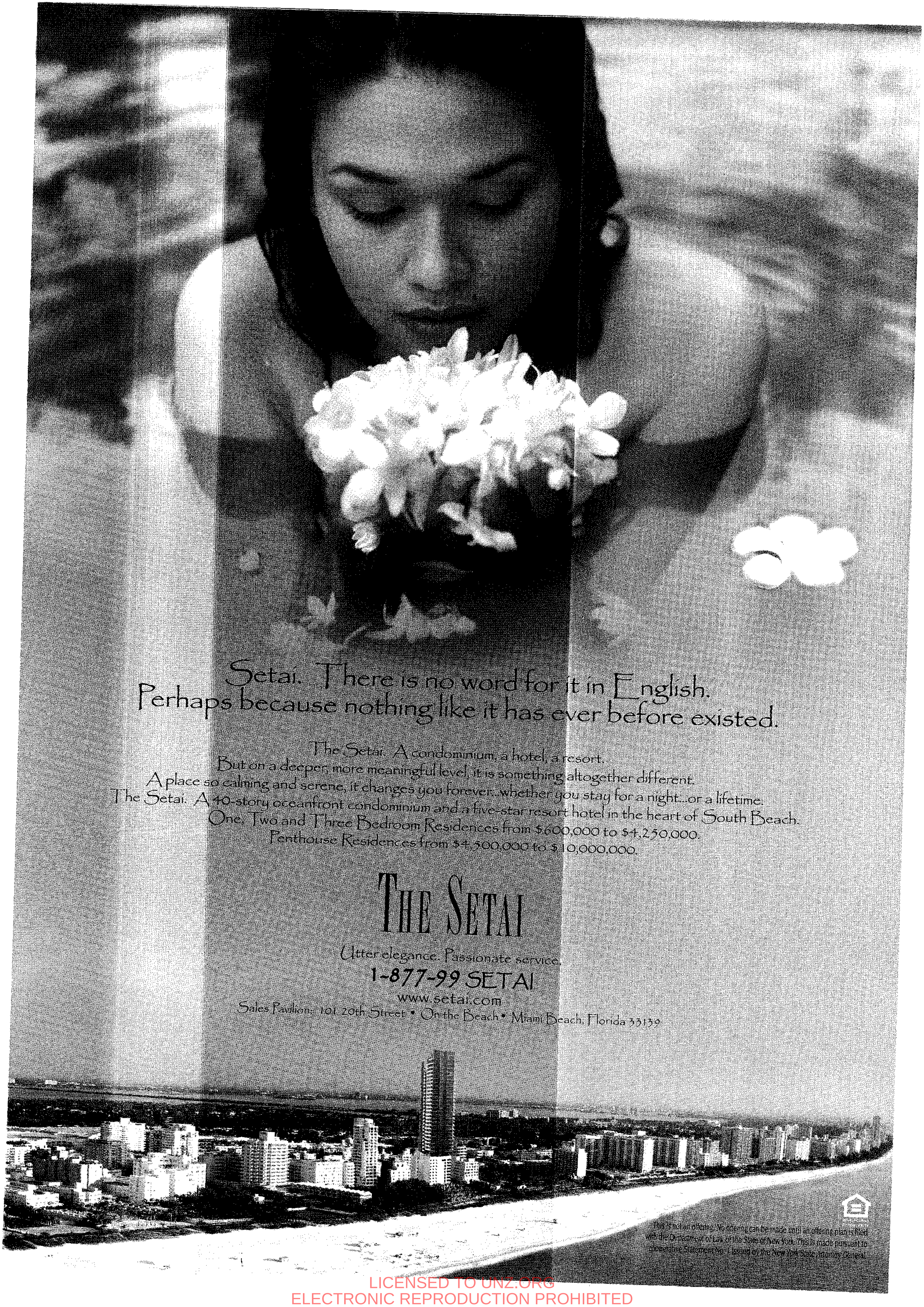
"You guys still making markets for customers?" he asks.

"Yep." I look down the row. All the traders have their noses close to their screens. The salesmen are at their stations. There's a maintenance man in a blue jumpsuit fooling with the thermostat.

"You sure? 'Cause I heard you're not open for business."

There are no outward signs of problems: the lights are still on, paper towels still show up in the bathroom, there's coffee in the pantry. But I have no idea what guys are doing in emerging markets or mortgage bonds, and I wouldn't even recognize a Lehman stock trader. What I do know is my little bunker of a seat, where I stare at a stack of broker screens piled four feet above my desk, where to my left is a second wall of computer screens with yet more price information and analytics, and where the firm's one Canadian trader sits eighteen inches to my right. But what about just three feet beyond my broker screens, where the derivatives guys work their alchemy? Who knows?

"Ray," Andy says that night. We are stuck in a sea of traffic on the F.D.R. "With this crisis, the Japanese are practically giving away cars. Why don't you wave in a new one and get rid of this piece-of-shit white Infiniti?" Ray's Infiniti is a 1993, with more than a hundred thousand miles on it. Andy is one of the senior traders on the government desk. He drives a new BMW 540, and has been complaining all year about riding in such an old car. My car is a 1993



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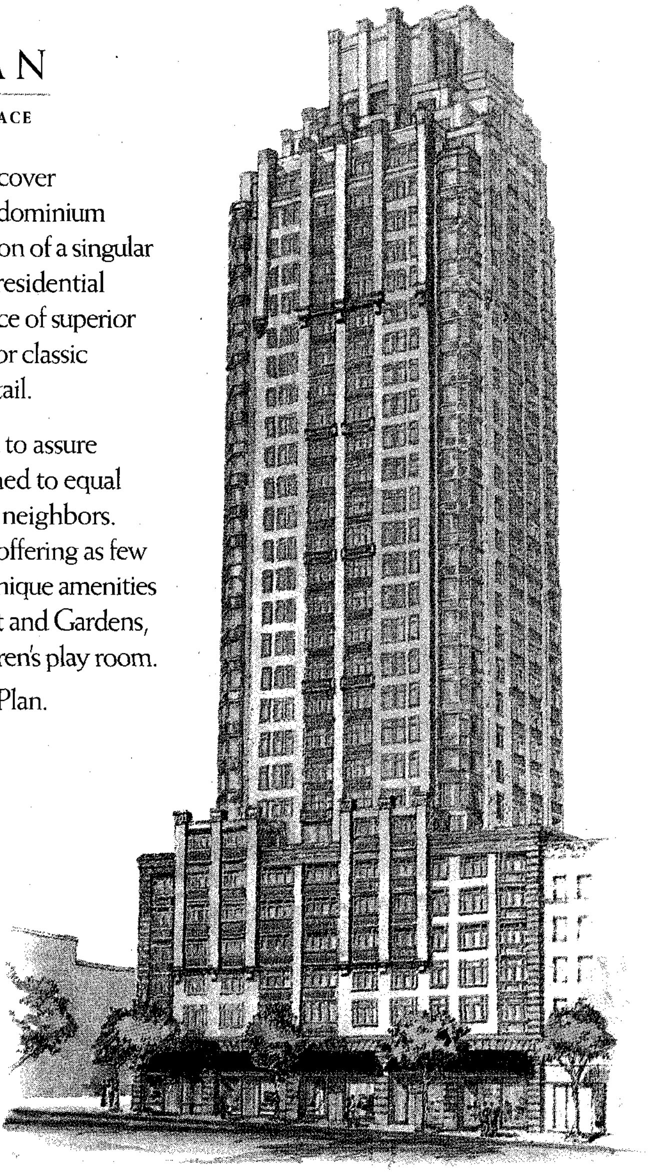

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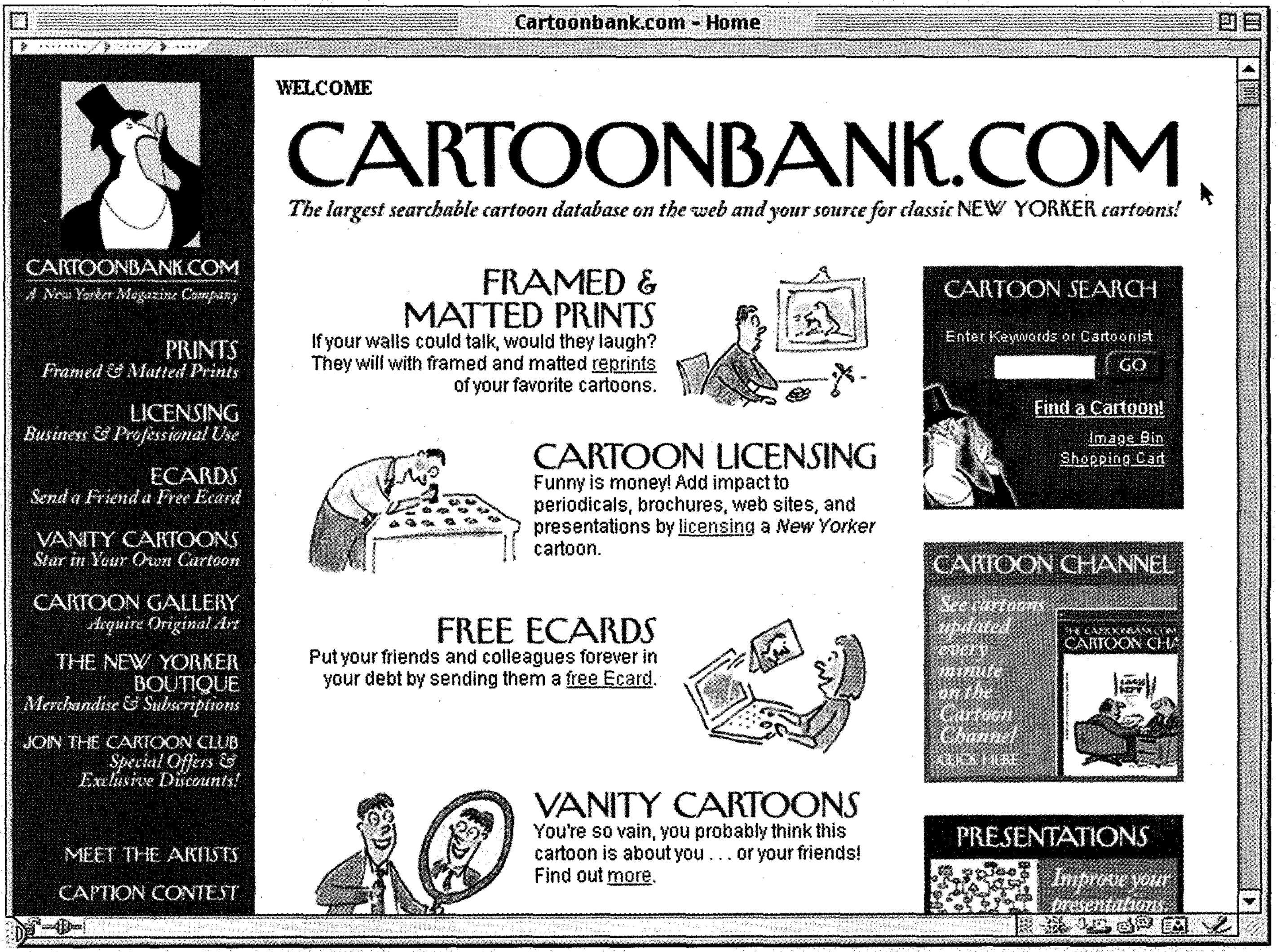

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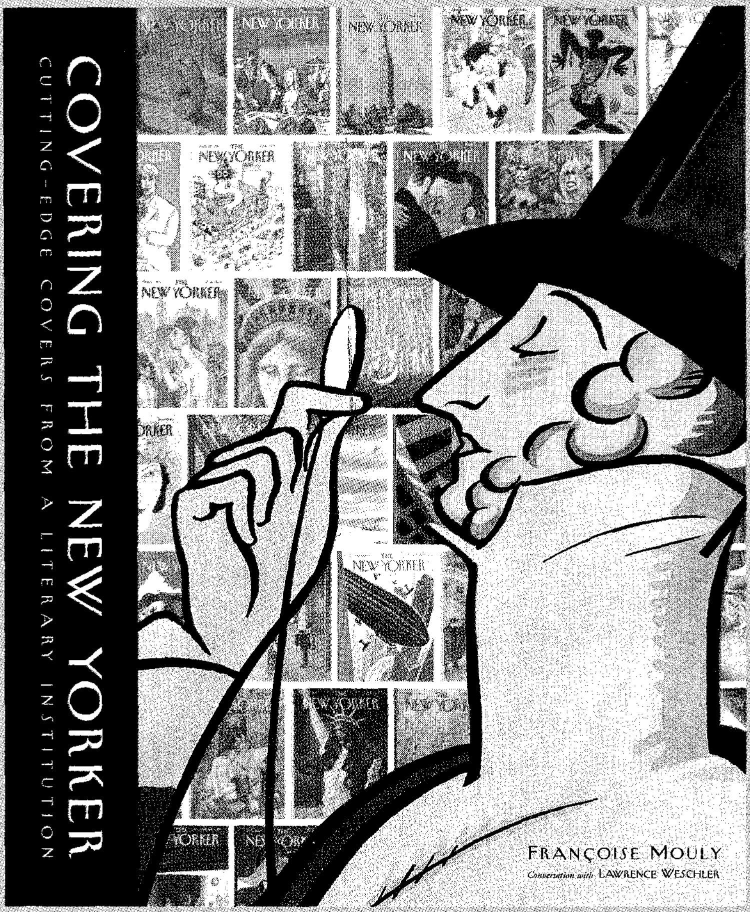
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Ford Escort, but I never drive. Instead, I pay Ray and Andy an extra commuting fee, for what they call their "pain and suffering."

"Are you kidding?" Ray, a corporate bond trader, says. "A new car? Don't you know what's going on in the world? I got a bad feeling about this one. Bankruptcy is not a good thing."

Bankruptcy would hit me hard. I've just paid off six-figure business-school loans and don't have any savings. I'm still new—I've been at Lehman three years—and at the low end of the pay scale, and I'm counting on my year-end bonus. Most of a trader's pay comes in the form of that bonus, and isn't handed out until early the next year. If the firm folds now, I'll lose most of a year's pay, pay that I've already earned.

This is not the life I had planned. I came to Wall Street so that I wouldn't have to worry about money again. I had been living in Colorado with my wife and son, writing for a living: nature shows for public television, an occasional technical manual, the odd piece of journalism. I supplemented my income by teaching skiing and, one desperate Christmas season, by waiting tables. In our best year, we made less than thirty thousand dollars, and the lean years were lean. I remember grocery shopping one day and putting off the purchase of a jar of peanut butter in order to stretch our food budget. I left the store and felt that something was terribly wrong. I was thirty years old and had degrees from good universities; I felt I should be doing better.

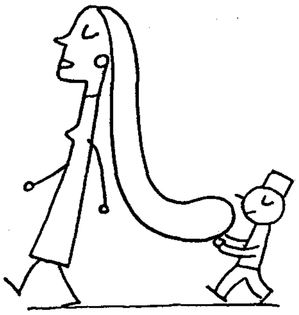
I started looking around for a lucrative day job that wouldn't bore me, and I settled on trading. I'd read about its pace and locker-room atmosphere, and I thought I might be good at it. What I wanted was lots of money, so much of it that after a ten-year career I might not have to work again. This was the promise of Wall Street. I knew that the hours would be long, the pressure intense, but I was willing to put up with all this if I could get the money. The phrase "get the money" became part inside joke, part mantra with my wife and me. We were sick of being poor.

Wall Street firms don't hire freelance writers to trade bonds. I took the G.M.A.T., applied to business schools, and eventually matriculated at Wharton. In less than two years, I was working on the Street. I can't help but think that I missed the good years. My manager leaves résumés face up on his desk, to remind the traders of our expendability. My household income reaches six figures, but for a family of four in the New York area—we had a daughter after we moved—this is nothing special, and it hasn't been easy to save.

My wife and I have discussed our number many times, and we settled on the far-off fortune of two million. We've figured that two million could safely throw off a hundred and fifty thousand dollars per year, and on that we could live handsomely outside New York. We've also figured on ten years to make our number, or at least to get close to it. It's been going on four, and we have nothing put away. I hadn't thought that I'd have to earn almost two hundred thousand dollars just to pay off my student loan, but even without that I can see now that my expectations have been too high. One Sunday afternoon, I talk to my wife about leaving after this year's bonus.

"You've got to stick it out a little longer," she says. "We've come too far to quit now."

In this environment, it's not easy to keep the faith. Firms like Lehman have found it harder and harder to make money in the bond business. In the secondary market, customers have Internet-based trading systems that allow them to send a request for an offer to five dealers simultaneously and buy the bills from the dealer with the best price. The systems also send out pricing information on every bond in the Treasury universe, creating total pricing transparency, and pricing transparency is to a dealer what daylight is to a vampire. U.S. Treasury traders have another worry: our market is shrinking. The government has been running surpluses, and so it is issuing less new debt than it is retiring. This means that our liquidity is drying up just as the new computerized trading systems are reducing what we can charge for liquidity.



Just last year, we used to joke about the franchise value of a government-bond seat. We'd say that you could put a monkey in the seat and it would make money. In those days, if you were standing by the desk when an easy trade came in, you'd hear men in dress shirts and ties, many of whom were making between half a million and a million dollars a year, screeching like chimpanzees at the trader who got the juicy trade. It's not a joke that you hear anymore.

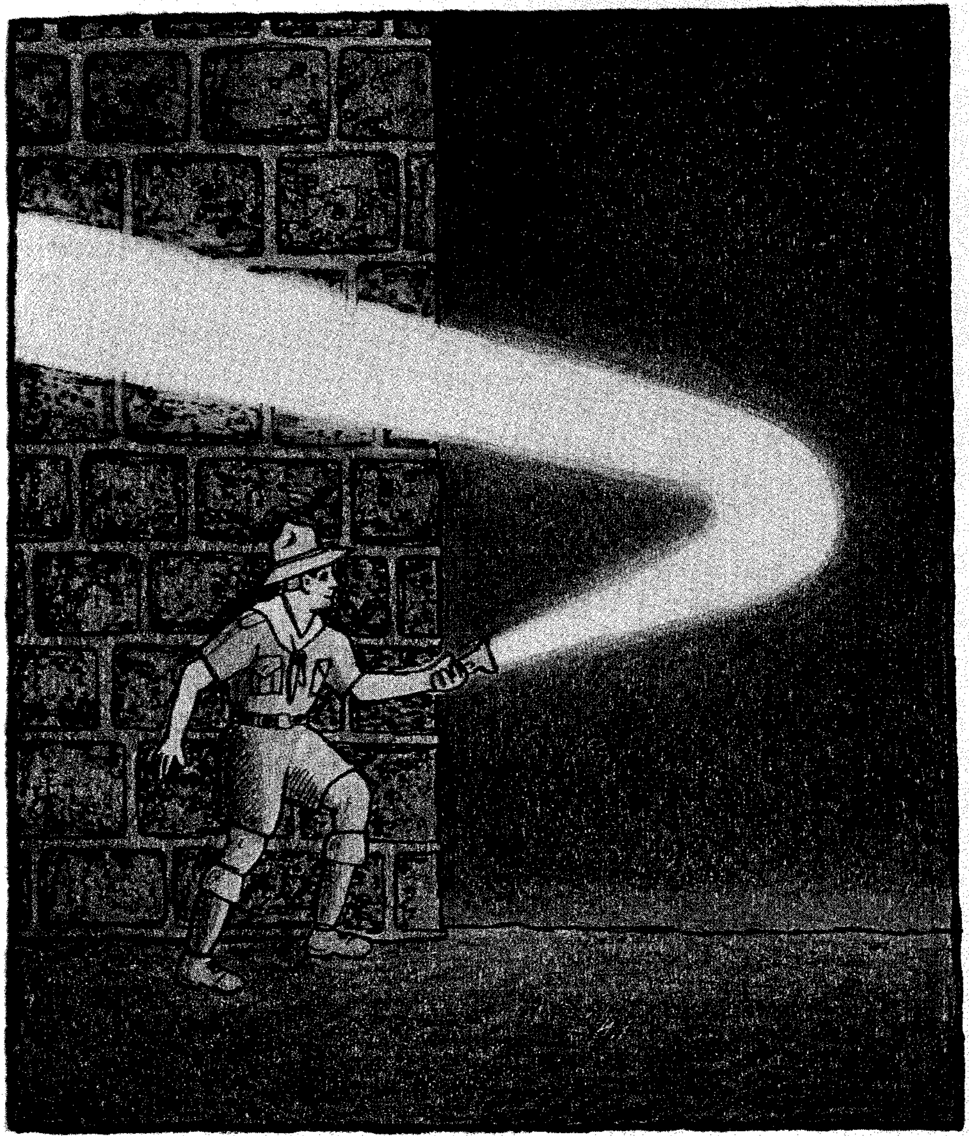
"Hey, Scott! Pick up!" This is a broker talking to me through one of the squawk boxes on my desk. I have eight, two stacks of four. All day long, disembodied voices come through these little speakers, telling me what's happening on bill trades, or giving me updates from the Board of Trade or the Mercantile Exchange in Chicago.

I pick up the broker, who tells me that Josh has been fired.

I want to call him, but I figure he's probably not home yet. Besides, I've got a situation on the desk. I bought a large amount of three-month bills in an auction, and the market is not obliging me by going up. I resolve to call Josh the next day.

Spend time on the trading floor and you'll see plenty of people get fired. In my first year at Lehman, I was given more than a week off while the firm "cleaned house." It was felt that the presence of newly minted M.B.A.s would breed resentment, though management could not resist replacing people who made five hundred thousand dollars a year with those who made less than a hundred. One day, the trader sitting next to me got into an argument with the head of the desk, who called him into the office and fired him. The trader came out of the office and packed his belongings into two small boxes, which I helped him carry to the elevator. We shook hands, and he was gone. From incident to eviction was no more than twenty minutes. He'd been a big producer at the firm for more than a decade.

The news about Josh depresses me. Add to that a day of trading, and by the



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time I leave that night with my car pool the effects are physical. I'm hot and sweaty, my back aches, and my right hamstring is tight from my having sat in the same position all day. There's a vise-like sensation at my temples. I'm not the only guy feeling this way. Andy has to readjust the BMW's rearview mirror because the day has literally beaten him down; he can no longer sit high enough to see out of it.

Several days pass before I finally search out Josh's home number.

"Thanks for calling," he says. "Really. I appreciate it. You didn't have to."

I sense shame in his voice. I ask what happened.

"The word came down that they had to cut a body, and my boss, well . . . You know how that goes."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm talking to people. Some not even in the business. I'll land somewhere."

In mid-December, I get called into my manager's office to learn what my total annual compensation will be this year. It's a figure that is decided subjectively, in secret, and then announced at year's end. Profitability matters, of course, but big numbers can be explained away by management, and some well-connected traders always manage to get more than their fair share. In the end, I figure that traders are usually paid around fifty to seventy per cent of what the firm thinks the trader could get from a competing firm. Managers, on the other hand, seem to earn in excess of what they might be worth elsewhere. At least, that's my sense of it. Lehman managers rarely leave the firm, which they would if they were able to do better for themselves elsewhere, whereas Lehman traders are heading for the door all the time.

My manager is a man of medium build and height. His eyes are round and small, set deep in a face that often seems to be smirking but can turn expressive with rage. I spot a pile of résumés on his desk. There's a window behind him, through which I can see Stuyvesant High School and cement-gray sky. He briefly acknowledges that I had a good year, but spends most of his time talking about what a tough year it's been for the firm. I almost beg him to stop. This is my fourth bonus discussion, and it has become unbearable to listen to all the reasons that the firm can't pay me more. My bonus comes to a little more than two hundred thousand.

Two weeks later, the firm announces record profits for the year of three-quarters of a billion dollars. The firm's operating committee takes home nine figures just for itself. "If you don't like what you're making," my manager once told me, "go find a job that pays you more."

When Lehman's stock price begins to rise, Andy starts in again about Ray's car.

"C'mon, Ray," he says. "This piece-of-shit Infiniti is going to break down and we'll freeze to death on the side of the road."

"You mean you will," Ray replies. He keeps a down jacket and a bottle of Gatorade in the trunk. My guess is that he makes more than five hundred grand a year.

Andy, who surely makes more, never wears an overcoat, even in the dead of winter. "Bonuses are about to hit," he says. "You've got no excuse."

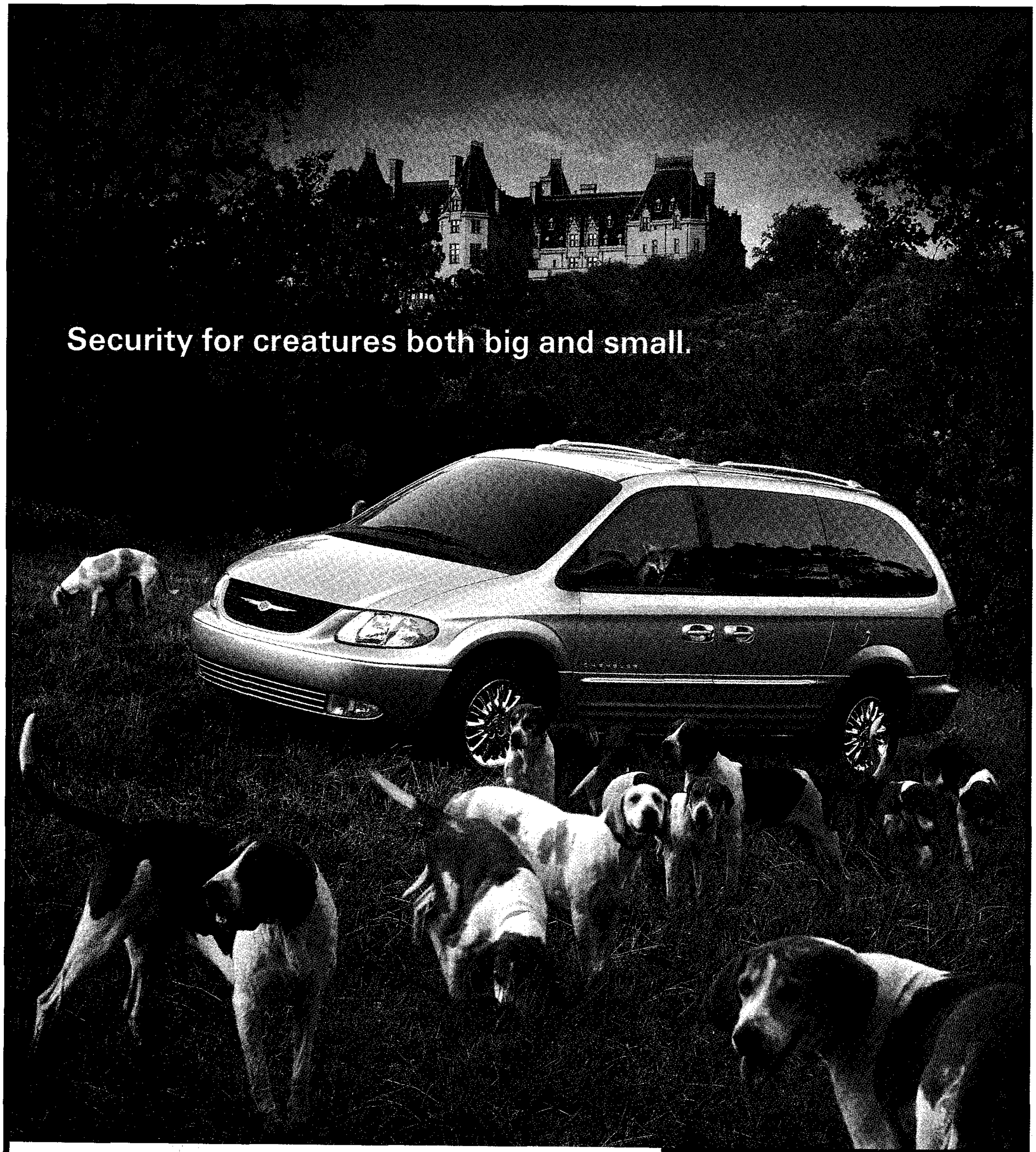
Bonuses arrive in February, and I notice a few new Porsches and Mercedeses in the parking garage. Meanwhile, we wait for the jockeying to begin. It is part of the seasonal rhythm of Wall Street that people change jobs early in the year, once they have cashed their bonus checks. The seat next to me opens up when our Canadian trader is fired and not replaced.

In April, my manager is replaced by the head strips trader. Then the other strips trader quits, leaving the firm without one. I end up with a permanent position in the strips seat. My move to the strips desk is a major promotion, earned, as many are, by simply surviving. My profile and pay will certainly improve.

It's now mid-May, and Lehman Brothers is without a Treasury-bill trader. It isn't long before Josh comes in for an interview. He looks about the same: dark, tall yet slightly stooped, with an expression that's a bit quick to break into a smile. He's been out of work for six months. "Staying up late," he says when I ask what he's been doing. "Sleeping in. Trading my own account online. Watching way too much daytime television." He makes it clear that he is desperate to work. I remember him once saying that he wanted to do something outside the business, but he's been on the Street since he got out of college, and what else does he really know?

The next week, he has my old job.

As a strips trader, I'm making about fifty per cent more than I made the previous year. Before I started in the business, my wife and I thought this was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wild, crazy money. Now we don't. Once we've given almost half to the government and have paid to live modestly in Westchester, we're not able to put away much, certainly not enough to get to our number, even if I can last ten years.

It embarrasses me to write this. Before I went to business school, I figured a salary of seventy-five thousand a year was more money than anyone should really hope for. Obviously, my idea of necessity has expanded. My children's clothes tend not to come from thrift shops anymore. My wife buys organic food and I say nothing about the expense. We just bought a new CD player, and we eat out a little more often. But it's no kind of life. I am thirty-seven years old. I have a wife and two small children. If I don't see them now, when will I see them?

By late summer, I've made up my mind to leave. We put our house on the market. In the meantime, we buy a house in Colorado, and my wife and children move there to start the school year. At work, I pretend that nothing has changed. I move in with friends in Yorktown. My hosts are kind and generous, but the room I'm given above the garage has no insulation and only a space heater to warm it; it's not a place where I want to linger, especially when the cold hits in January. I have my old phone number forwarded to a new line in Yorktown, so that Tokyo and London can dial the same number and not be any the wiser.

A person with a normal job would give two weeks' notice and leave, but I can't do that. Company policy is that people who resign or are let go before bonuses are paid receive no bonus, and my bonus will amount to more than two-thirds of my pay. I'm not taking any chances until that check is in my account.

One December night, I find myself drinking a Coors Light in the back of a white stretch limo, its interior decked out with Day-Glo lights and a mirrored ceiling. Around me sit four of my fellow Lehman government traders, plus two brokers from the Board of Trade who have made the trip in from Chicago to entertain us. It's year's end, and the mood is nostalgic. As we crawl up the East Side toward the Italian restaurant where we are to eat dinner, we start to name all the people who once worked in the government-bond busi-

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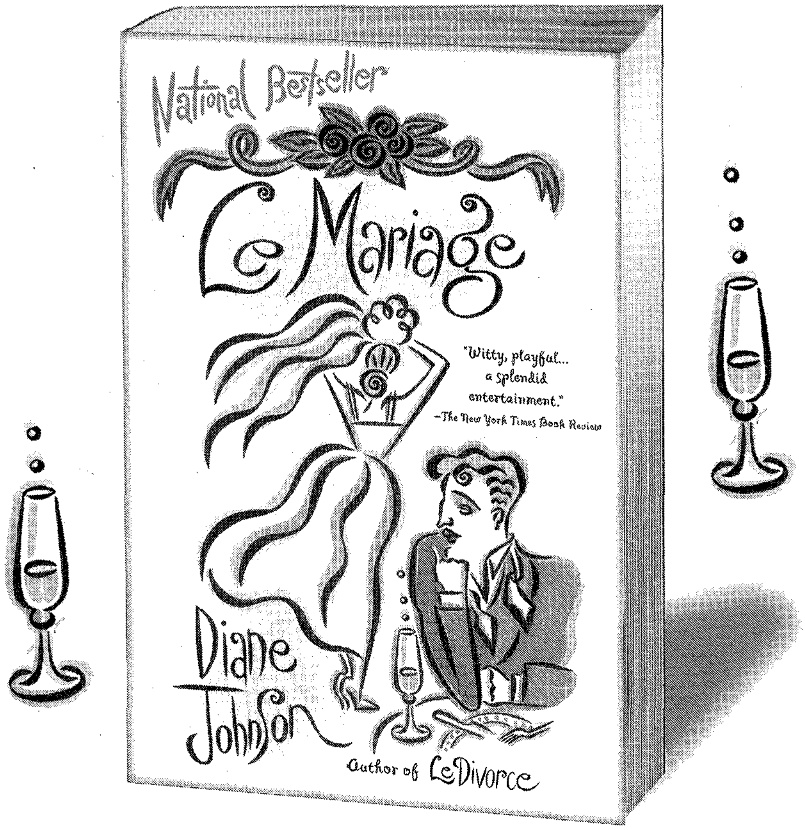
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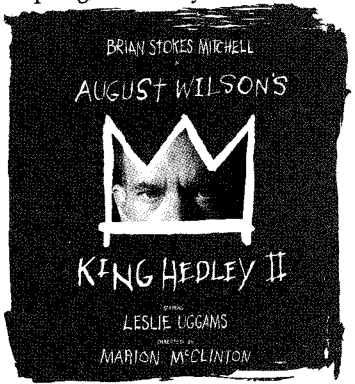

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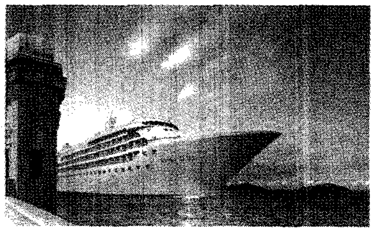

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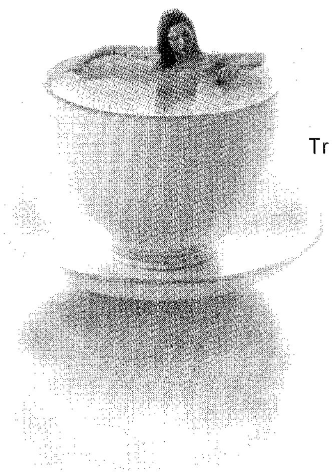
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ness at Lehman. The conversation becomes, as conversations among traders often do, a competition of sorts. We shout out names, conjuring up our common history. Cooper, Keusch, Kathy, Edmo. Abbas and Samer, Capra and Estes. Schupak. Jesse, Fumai, Pasta. B.B., Bragg, Cordrey, Foley. In the end, we come up with forty or so traders, roughly three times the number of people who work there now. "We ought to put their names up on the wall," one trader says as we pile out of the limo and stumble toward the restaurant. "Like the Vietnam Memorial." I think of my name on the wall.

It's an odd bonus season. In normal years, management starts early with what we call the hookey duke: prevarications about losses and hardships that will keep a lid on bonuses. But this year: silence. My guess is that I will be paid about half what it will cost to replace me—a lot of money in the real world, but a pittance on Wall Street. Besides, who wants to work for half price?

We get our numbers on December 16th. At about one-fifteen, my manager calls. He tells me how to find him in an office above the trading floor.

I take a seat in the windowless office, bare except for an easel that stands next to my chair, as if I were part of an exhibit. True to this year's style, it's a short bonus talk. My manager sits behind the desk, in white shirtsleeves. Throughout the meeting, he twirls a pencil in his right hand. In front of him is a blank legal pad and a sheet of paper with a figure on it. He slides the paper over. About three hundred, as expected.

In years past, I've spoken in bonus meetings, but this is my fifth and I'm beyond that. Nothing I say now will get me more money.

"Is that it?" I ask.

"That's it."

I'm back trading by one-thirty.

I have a decent December, but January proves to be my worst month trading ever. This problem is compounded one Monday morning when I return from the men's room and my boss tells me that I've just bought a hundred and seventeen million twenty-year bonds from a Boston account. That is, my boss priced the trade but he apparently expects me to take responsibility for it. I jump into my seat and try to hedge it, but the market immediately plummets and the original price my boss paid for the bonds was too high. I lose a hundred and seventy thousand dollars on the trade.

I am livid. The rule is that if you price a trade it's yours. I also know that if the market had gone up after those bonds were bought the trade would not have been put in my ledger; my boss would have kept it because it was profitable. I throw down my headset in disgust. Under normal circumstances, I would stand and fight right there, but we're in a new year, one in which I won't get a bonus. My boss can jam all the losers he wants into my ledger, and it won't affect me; in fact, within a week he'll be stuck with them. I do go through the motions, though. I ask for a private meeting and am ignored.

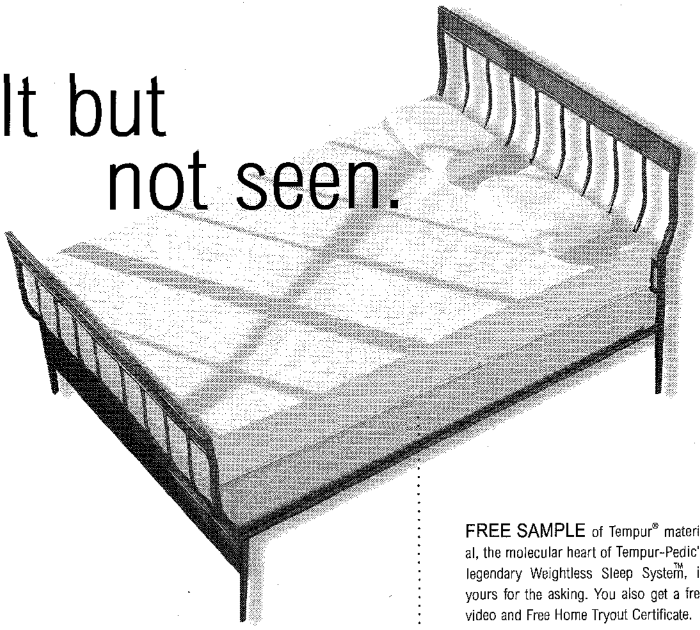
That night, my Escort breaks down in the driveway of the house where I am staying. The next morning, it snows eight inches and I can't get a tow truck to answer my call. I decide not to go to work. I have no good way to get there, and no desire to do so.

The next day, the twenty-sixth, I get called into an office by my manager. He has the bulk you might expect of a man who has spent the better part of fifteen years sitting at a trading desk, and the stiff walk of a man twice his age. In fact, he's only two years my senior. He scolds me for not coming to work the day before. I use my infirm Escort and the weather as an excuse.

My boss finds this inadequate. "People around here make a lot of money," he says. He pauses, and gulps in a breath. "Even if they don't think it's a lot of money. And we've got to have the desk covered."

Instead of ceding the point, I bring up what I've come to think of as the toilet trade. I'm still angry about it, and finally I have an audience. I should have realized sooner in my career that misbehaving was the best way to get attention. My boss contends that it was my fault for being in the men's room. He is deadly serious. I should have made sure I had backup (he is my backup) and alerted the sales force in the branches.

I go back to my desk, and Josh walks down the row for a visit. He's mentioned before that it's odd that we seem to talk less now that we work fifty feet from each other than when we were at differ-



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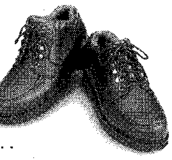

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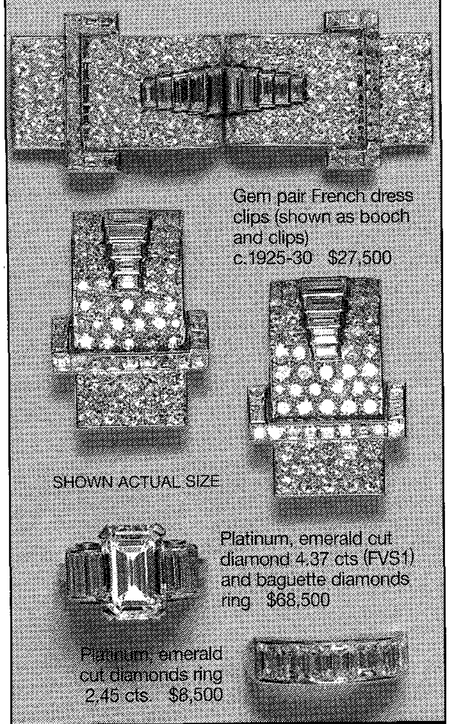

Gem pair French dress clips (shown as booch and clips) c.1925-30 $27,500

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ent firms. "I'm in a book group," he tells me. The book group consists of him and one of his brokers. "We're reading 'The Grapes of Wrath.' I tell you, that man can write."

I tell him that I agree, that I think Steinbeck is underappreciated. "So," I ask. "How are bills?"

He shakes his head. "You don't want to know."

My phone chirps. On the trading desk, a ringing phone takes precedence over a live conversation. Josh heads back to his seat.

"Lehman," I say, quick and brusque. It's typical trading-desk phone etiquette.

"Scott Lasser, please," my wife says. Even after all these years of calling the desk, she still has a hard time recognizing my Lehman voice.

"It's me," I tell her.

"It's dumping," she says, referring to the snowfall in Colorado. She's been skiing, and is calling to tell me about it. Meanwhile, one of the new associates on the desk is tapping me on the shoulder. Because I wear a headset, he can't tell that I'm on the phone. He says that my manager wants to see me in the office again.

"I gotta go," I tell my wife. "I think I'm about to be fired." I'm only joking, but my wife nearly panics. It's so close to bonuses.

"Checks are in," my manager says in the office. He hands me my bonus check.

Over the years, I've spoken with traders who fantasize about quitting solely for the purpose of telling off their bosses. I've had a few of those fantasies myself. But when I walk into my manager's office a little after eight-thirty on the last day of January I find that I want to make it quick. "It's not worth it for me to continue to work here," I say. "It takes too much time for the money."

My manager addresses the time issue.

"The hours are the hours," I say. "I don't expect you to change them. And, as for the money, I'm not here to haggle. I'm set to go. I hope you will do your best to get me out of here quickly."

Next, I meet with my manager's boss, the man who runs government trading worldwide. He starts off in a friendly tone, explaining that he wants me to stick around for a few days while they make arrangements.

"I have plans to leave town tomorrow," I say.

"Well," he snaps. "You're just going to have to change those plans."

I say nothing. I watch him fume and think he is a man accustomed to getting his way, especially with people like me.

"You're supposed to give two weeks," he says.

"Not traders."

"Yeah, if you're going over to Merrill we don't want you on the desk. But you're not doing that. Did you think you couldn't tell us? You thought we'd screw you out of your bonus?" He stares off to the side, shaking his head slightly.

I think about Josh, who got fired ahead of his bonus; I think about a profitable prop trader from Lehman's derivatives group who was canned the previous December, ahead of his bonus. Of course I thought he'd screw me out of my bonus.

"Jesus, Scott," he's saying. "That's not the way Wall Street works."

After that meeting, I spend about ten more minutes on the desk, waiting to be processed out, and I use the time to say my goodbyes.

"You son of a bitch," Andy says when I tell him. He's smiling. "Good for you. You don't want to stick around here. What are you going to do, go back to Colorado?"

I nod.

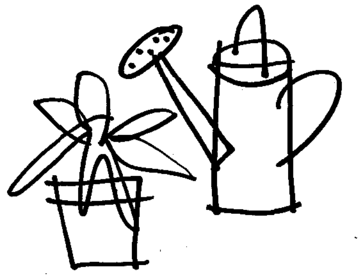
"Putting your house on the market?"

"Already sold."

"You son of a bitch," he says.

I work my way down the row. My fellow-traders wish me well, and most express envy at my plans, even those who I'm sure will never leave. It isn't long before I'm at Josh's seat. He's wearing a white shirt and pin-striped slacks. From behind, with the phone at his ear and his dark hair, his nose pressed close to a screen, I could almost mistake him for myself.

"Sell another," he tells his broker. It's Monday, the day the Treasury auctions bills, typically a busy day for a bill trader. "Another!" he yells. ♦



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ANNALS OF COMMUNICATIONS

THE LOST TYCOON

Now he has no wife, no job, and no empire, but Ted Turner may just save the world.

BY KEN AULETTA

Early last year, Ted Turner seemed invincible. He was the largest shareholder in AOL Time Warner, owning around four per cent of the soon-to-be-merged companies; his celebrated name was on the door of a major division, Turner Broadcasting System; and his dimpled chin, gap-toothed smile, and pencil-thin Gable-esque mustache were recognizable everywhere. His life is documented by the framed magazine covers that crowd the walls of his Atlanta office: Turner in 1976, launching the first "Superstation," by transforming a weak local television signal into a robust cable network; Turner in 1977, skippering his boat, Courageous, to victory in the America's Cup; Turner pioneering the purchase of professional sports teams as cheap and reliable programming; Turner inventing the twenty-four-hour Cable News Network; Turner buying Hollywood film libraries to create new cable-television networks; Turner as *Time's* Man of the Year.

Ted Turner's business successes didn't end when, in 1996, Turner Broadcasting merged with Time Warner. His influence at the world's largest media company was pervasive; he played the role of crazy-uncle-in-the-basement whose large appetite for cost-cutting has to be appeased, and in the process he helped revive the company's stock. But when, in January of 2000, Time Warner and Turner agreed to join with the Internet company America Online, Turner was not invited to participate in the talks about how the merged company would function.

Less than four months later, Ted Turner was fired. The news, Turner says, was delivered during a telephone call from Gerald Levin, the C.E.O. of Time Warner, who told Turner what Turner had often told others: the company was going to reorganize. Turner Broadcasting would no longer report to Turner but, rather, to Robert Pittman, the chief operating officer of AOL. "You can't report to Pittman, so you have to have a more senior role," Levin remembers telling Turner. As Turner recalls, Levin went on to say, "Sorry, Ted, but you lose your vice-chairman title as well." According to Levin, Turner offered to give up his vice-chairmanship in order to keep running the Turner Broadcasting division, which included CNN, TNT, Turner Classic Movies, the TBS Superstation, the Cartoon Network, the New Line Cinema studio, the Atlanta Braves baseball team, the Atlanta Hawks basketball team, the Atlanta Thrashers hockey team, and Time Warner's HBO. "I didn't fire Ted," Levin insists today. "I said, 'This is the way we need to run the company.' "

Turner protested, in a series of calls first to Levin, then to Steve Case, the C.E.O. of AOL, who was to be the chairman of the new company, demanding that he not be deprived of supervision of CNN and the other cable networks that he had started. He thought that he would prevail, and in early May—perhaps because he, like Levin, hates confrontation, or perhaps because making speeches has become his accustomed mode of communication and he had now spoken—Turner got on his plane and headed for New Mexico, where he owns a five-hundred-and-eighty-thousand-acre ranch, and where he had invited some friends to join him. Turner is America's largest individual landowner, with nearly two million acres, or the rough equivalent of the land area of Delaware and Rhode Island combined. He owns twenty-two properties, in nine states and Argentina, and he spends about half his time at one or another of them.

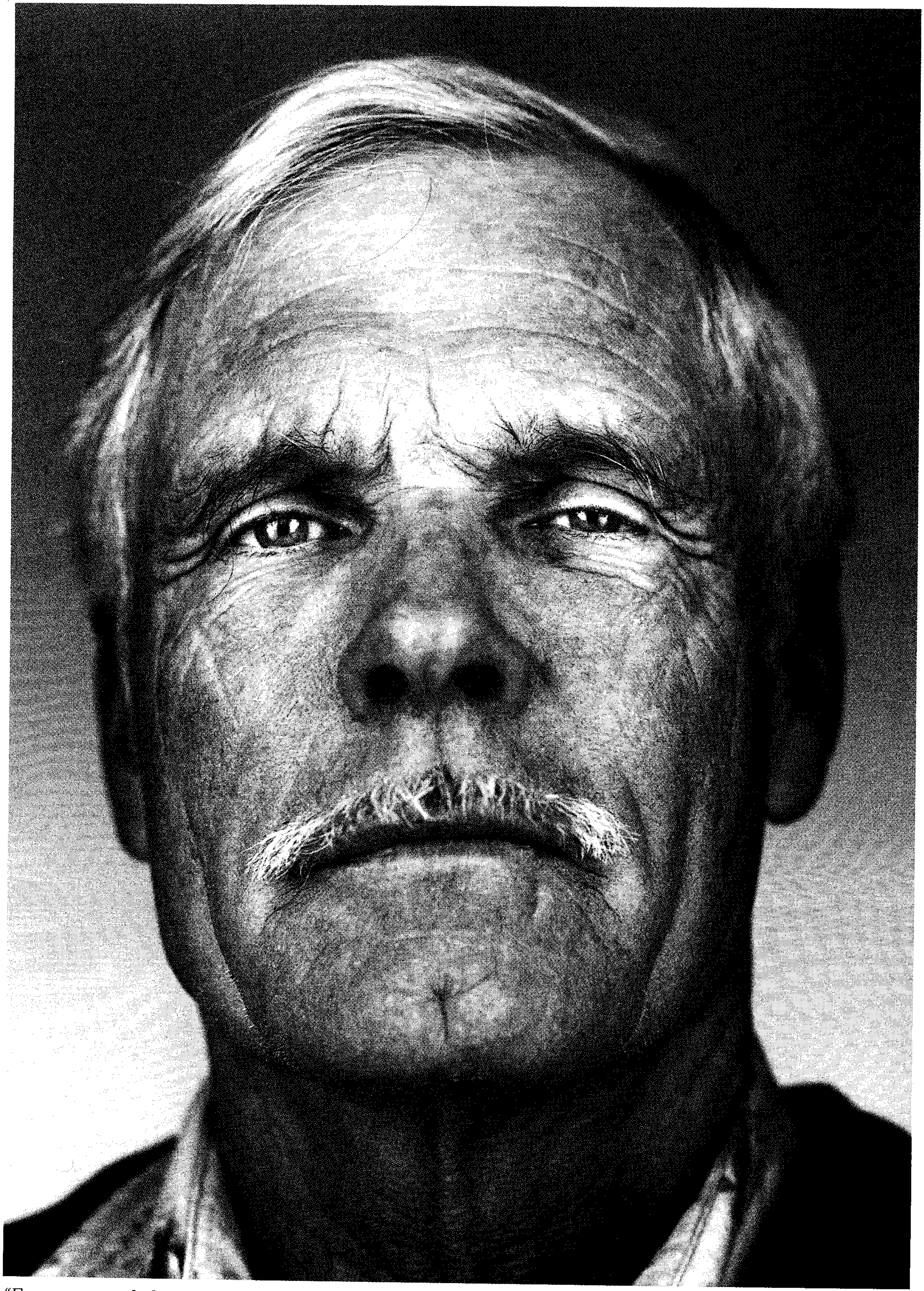
Turner didn't see that his travels often slowed decision-making at Turner Broadcasting. Although he entrusted most matters to a deputy, Terence F. McGuirk, he expected to approve major projects himself. AOL and Time Warner executives, however, were impatient with the peripatetic Turner. He is sixty-two, and even his friends wanted him to slow down. Jane Fonda, his former wife, thinks that she knows why he is so restless: "I say this with all the love in the world. . . . He has been severely, hauntingly traumatized. He always thinks something is about to be pulled out from him. He has no belief in permanency and stability. It's one reason why I'm not with him. Older age is about slowing down and growing vertically, not horizontally. That's not Ted."

Something was "pulled out" from Turner while he was in New Mexico, as he learned from a five-page fax that he received there. The fax, a press release issued by AOL Time Warner, announced a new management team for the company, awarding Turner one of two vice-chairmanships and "the additional title of Senior Advisor." The fax did not say that he had lost much of his authority, or that his five-year contract to manage Turner Broadcasting had been abrogated a year early. John Malone, the chairman of Liberty Media and an old friend of Turner's, who was a guest at the ranch, recalls that when the fax arrived "Ted went white. He was very upset. He thought it was extremely bad behavior for them to do it that way." Malone told Turner, "You can sue, but you won't get your job back. You'll just get money."

Turner's bosses tried to defuse the publicity with praise. At a press luncheon for CNN's twentieth anniversary, four weeks after the announcement, Case told reporters, "Ted Turner has been a hero of mine for twenty-five years, and he and I are basically going to be joined at the hip." Turner can be seduced with kind words, with pleas to work for the good of the team, but he wasn't this time. " 'Vice-chairman' is usually a title you give to somebody you can't figure out what else to do with," he says. He likened himself to a monarch.

Turner says that last year was one of the most miserable of his life. His mar-

SABA



"For some reason, he has a guilty conscience," Jane Fonda says. "He wants to get into Heaven." Photograph by Martin Schoeller.

riage to Fonda ended, after eight years, and this, too, was announced in January. In addition, he smashed his foot in a skiing accident; his beloved black Labrador, Chief, contracted coonhound disease and was temporarily paralyzed; his back hurt and he thought that he needed surgery; and two of his grandchildren were diagnosed with Hurler's syndrome, a rare and sometimes lethal enzyme deficiency. Most adults have the support of a spouse and family, friends, and a job; Turner didn't have a spouse, had never had intimate friends, and no longer ran his own company. "I felt like Job," Turner told me, adding, not for the first time, that he had felt "suicidal."

Yet Turner has, in the past several years, been commanding more attention outside his company, making a new identity for himself as a philanthropist—"I want to be Jiminy Cricket for America," he has said. In 1997, before it was fashionable for billionaires to make such gifts, he pledged a billion dollars to the United Nations. The Turner Foundation, which he controls, awarded fifty million dollars last year to environmental causes. (Turner is a devoted environmentalist—he can name every species of bird and animal on his ranches—and during the oil embargo of 1973 he sold his Cadillac and switched to more fuel-efficient cars; recently, he exchanged his Ford Taurus for a hybrid electric-and-gas Toyota Prius, which averages about fifty miles a gallon.) Last year, Turner started a foundation, the Nuclear Threat Initiative, whose goal is to curb the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, and he has pledged two hundred and fifty million dollars over the next five years. In December, to solve a long-running dispute between what the United States owed the United Nations and what Congress was willing to pay, Turner joined Richard C. Holbrooke, then the Ambassador to the U.N., to shape an extraordinary compromise: Turner would contribute the thirty-four-million-dollar difference, and the U.N. would adjust its future dues formula.

Turner calls himself "a do-gooder." He says so in a loud voice, and it gets louder as he gets excited. Turner is uninhibited, and is usually blissfully unaware of others; for one thing, he is hard of hearing and is too vain to use a hearing aid. "Half the people alive today are already living in what we would consider intolerable conditions," he declares. "One-sixth don't have access to clean drinking water; one-fifth live on less than a dollar a day; half the women in the world don't have equal rights with men; the forests are shrinking; the temperature's rising, and the oceans are rising, because of the melting of the ice cap." He sounds like a billionaire Jeremiah. In a hundred years, he believes, New York will be under water and it will be "so hot the trees are going to die." He continues, "It will be the biggest catastrophe the world has ever seen—unless we have nuclear war." He is outraged that the United States and others don't do more to alleviate these horrors and to combat the defense and foreign policies of George W. Bush. "The new Administration attempts to make enemies out of the Russians, the North Koreans, and the Chinese to justify the gigantic military buildup it wants to make in peacetime," he says. "The economy of North Korea is smaller than the economy of Detroit!" And he is disturbed by the world's exploding population; although he has five children, he once declared, "If I was doing it over again, I wouldn't have had that many, but I can't shoot them now that they're here."

Turner's contradictions are as clear as his views. He successfully opposed unionization at his company, yet he rails against élites. He has called himself "a socialist at heart" and a fiscal "conservative." Turner speaks out on behalf of the rights of women but refuses to denounce Islamic states that suppress women's rights. He has compared Rupert Murdoch, who owns the Fox network, to Hitler, yet when he is asked if he thinks Saddam Hussein is evil he says, "I'm not sure that I know enough to be able to answer that question." And though he preaches tolerance, he has uttered some intolerant words; for example, on Ash Wednesday, seeing the black smudge on the foreheads of some CNN staff members, he asked them whether they were "Jesus freaks." As he frequently does when he says something unwise, Turner apologized, blithely assuming that the furor would pass. It did. A week later, Turner told me, "That's the downside of speaking spontaneously."

Turner has two offices, in New York and Atlanta, and they seem to capture the odd mixture of his views: in his New York office, which is nearly bare, a bust of Alexander the Great peers from a shelf, while the Atlanta office, which is vast and crammed with trophies and artifacts, features busts of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Gandhi. "I've gone from a man of war to a man of peace," Turner explains. He offers the Turner principle of world diplomacy: "Just about everybody will be friendly toward us if we are friendly with them."

Despite Turner's success, people who meet him often think that he is peculiar. They hear his piercing laugh and the long "Ahhhhhhhhh"s he utters as he pauses between words or thoughts, which veer off in surprising directions, and they have no other explanation. A former director of Turner Broadcasting's board who counts himself a friend and a fan describes Turner as a fascinating amalgam of opposites: "He's a mixture of a genius and a jackass. I think Ted could have run for President of the United States—if there were not the jackass side."

The "jackass side" of Turner appears because, he himself says, "I don't have any idea what I'm going to say. I say what comes to my mind." Gerald Levin puts this in the best light: "Ted is by far the *most interesting* person I've ever met—how he reacts to things. It's as if a child were speaking, without any social inhibitions. You don't say in business, 'I got fired.' He'll just speak out loud what may be going through someone's mind, and he'll say it to everybody. I think that's a beautiful characteristic. He's angelic. The whole world is socially constrained. I love and respect this about Ted, but for other people it may be very difficult."

In November of 1996, for instance, the Friars Foundation honored Turner at a lifetime-achievement black-tie dinner. After he received his award and made a short speech, the lights dimmed, and then, as various entertainers, including the comedian Alan King, prepared to roast him, Turner, who insists on getting to bed early, grabbed Fonda's arm and departed, leaving the crowd gasping and King bellowing, "Rupert Murdoch was right—you are nuts."

On other occasions, humor redeems the situation. In January of 1999, Turner was invited to address the American Chamber of Commerce in Berlin. Eason

Jordan, who oversaw international coverage for CNN, had briefed Turner on what he shouldn't say to his audience, made up largely of Germans. Nevertheless, Jordan recalls, the CNN staff was nervous, because Turner had said, "I'll wing it." And he did.

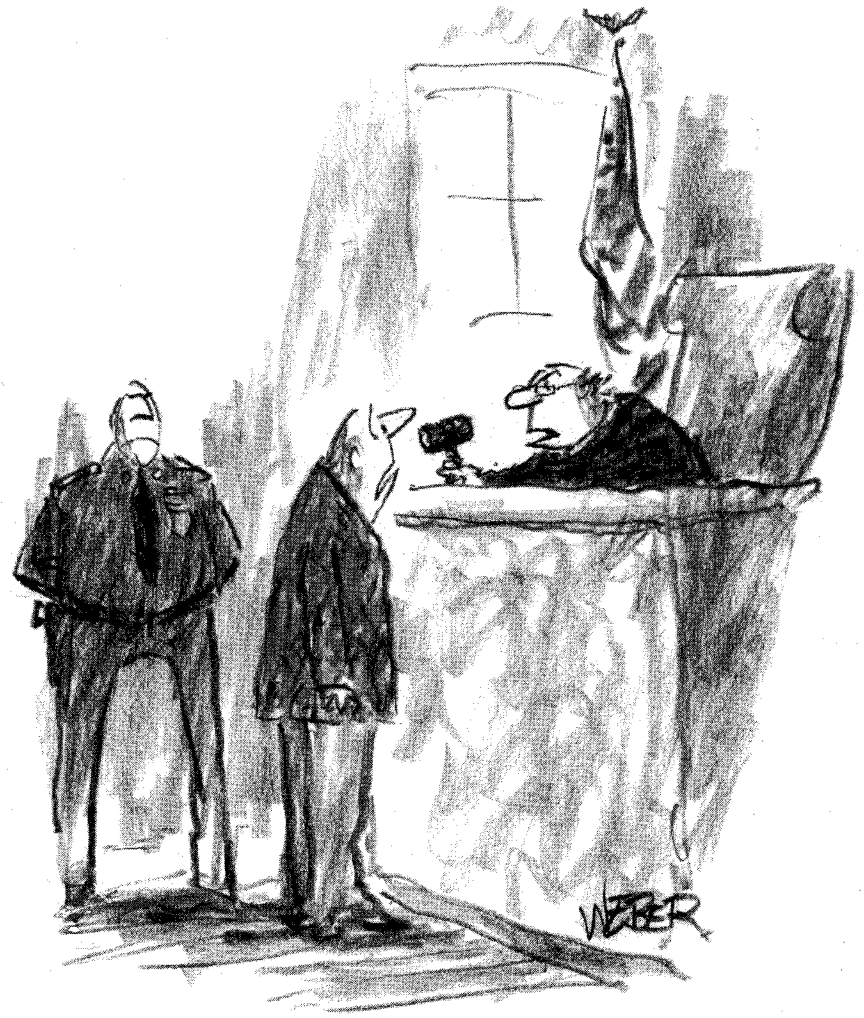
"You know, you Germans had a bad century," Turner declared. "You were on the wrong side of two wars. You were the losers." He continued, "I know what that's like. When I bought the Atlanta Braves, we couldn't win, either. You guys can turn it around. You can start making the right choices. If the Atlanta Braves could do it, then Germany can do it." The audience laughed with Turner, not at him. He left the podium to a standing ovation.

Turner likens himself to Zorba the Greek: "I lose my self-restraint and . . . just get up and dance sometimes." Gail Evans, a senior executive at Turner Broadcasting, says that Turner is always "winking," and she recalls the time he asked her to take the oceanographer Jacques Cousteau to lunch: "Go buy Mr. Cousteau a tuna-fish sandwich!" Today, associates are not laughing; they speak of Turner in the past tense, offering epitaphs. "He's the last of the revolutionary and creative minds in our business," CNN's chief international correspondent, Christiane Amanpour, who joined the company in 1983, says. "The idea of twenty-four-hour news and global news is his creation. That's changed the world. It's changed people's relations with their governments. It's meant that governments can no longer crack down with impunity on protests. And Ted's business also had a human face and a moral face and a social face. It wasn't just about making money and building an empire." She adds, sadly, "He's been shunted aside."

Even Turner talks about himself in a retrospective cadence: "My business side is coming to a close. It's time for me to move on, anyway." Last May, after AOL and Time Warner announced the new management structure, Robert Pittman tried to debunk press speculation that Turner was unhappy, saying, "I think Ted's going to have more influence than he had before." Now Pittman, who was born in Mississippi and has spent weekends hunting with Turner, says, "For me, Ted has a very big role. I don't make major decisions about Turner Broadcasting without talking to Ted." This is not what Turner thinks. "They tell me I have moral authority, and that's great," he says. He looks down at his tie, which is decorated with orange bison, and goes on to say, wistfully, "I'm very busy. Over the last three to four years, I've created another life for myself, and even if they had offered me the chairmanship of the company I probably wouldn't have taken it. It would require all my time, and I'd have to move to New York and I don't want that. I've got this other stuff that I think is in many ways more important."

In March, Turner's business influence was further diminished when the parent company announced that his top lieutenants at Turner Broadcasting—Terence McGuirk, the chairman and C.E.O., and Steven J. Heyer, the president—would be replaced by Jamie Kellner, the chief executive and founder of the WB broadcast network. To achieve more of the company's much touted synergies, Turner Broadcasting would be folded into a combined broadcast-and-cable-television division, which would be run by Kellner; Kellner would move to Atlanta from Hollywood. In a press release, Turner applauded Kellner's promotion. He was pleased that the separate fiefdoms in his old company and Time Warner would be joined—he blames Levin for wanting "to keep everybody weak, so he could be stronger"—but sorry that AOL Time Warner was practicing what he thinks of as management by the numbers.

Since Turner's dismissal, his offices, at the CNN Center, in Atlanta, and at Time Warner's headquarters, at 75 Rockefeller Plaza, have been largely idle. Friends notice that his shoulders slope more, that his hair has turned



"I hereby sentence you to the Vermeer show on a Saturday afternoon."

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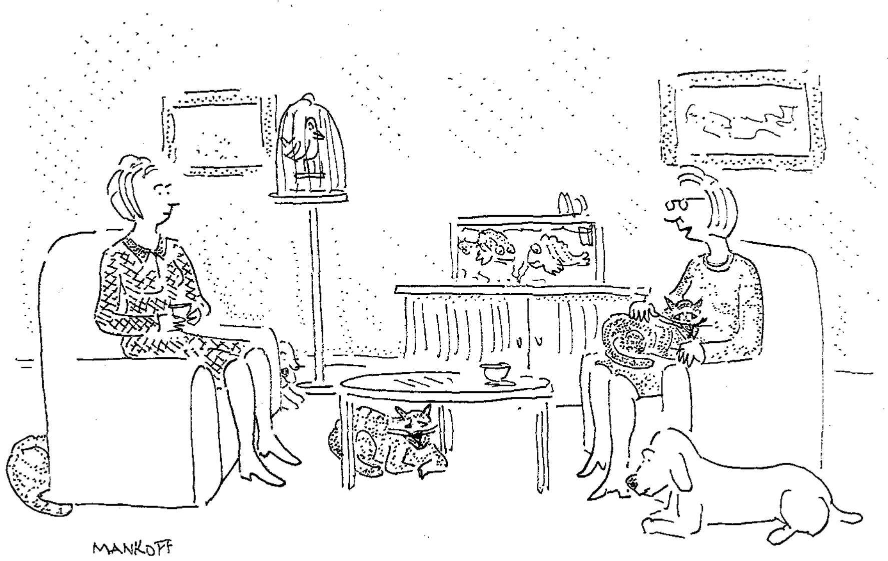


"Look, children are just pathetic substitutes for people who can't have pets."

white, that his hearing is worse, that he complains about pain in his back and his foot, that he is self-conscious about his age. His energy level has decreased, along with his business authority. He is a member of the company's official executive committee, but it meets just once a month; the core corporate executive committee meets for lunch every Monday without him.

Still, the needy side of Turner compels him to want to please. Before an Advertising Council dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria last November in honor of Turner and Levin, Turner stood awkwardly beside Levin in a receiving line. As they turned to enter the ballroom, Turner pointed to me and told Levin that I was writing about him. Levin said he knew, and that prompted Turner to reassure him: "I checked first with corporate communications. I would not have done this unless I had approval." Such behavior does not surprise Jane Fonda. Turner is insecure, she says, noting that the man who thinks of himself as Rhett Butler is really the more vulnerable character in his favorite movie: "He loves 'Gone with the Wind' for lots of reasons, and one of them is that he identifies with Scarlett O'Hara."

Rick Kaplan, who was fired as president of CNN/U.S. last September, recalls being taken to lunch by Turner at a Southern-kitchen restaurant, where "you thought you were walking in with Babe Ruth to Yankee Stadium." For the first time, Kaplan noticed, Turner talked mostly about the past: "Whenever I had spent any time with him, he'd always talk about the future. All of a sudden, gone from his conversation were dreams for the future. And he was supposed to be there to make me feel better. Instead, I left feeling worse for him. I spent more time telling him positive, uplifting things, telling him the truth—that people revere him and it doesn't matter what his title is and it doesn't matter what anyone says his responsibilities are. Ted could sell all his stock, divest himself of every nickel he's got, and if he walked into the CNN newsroom the place would stand at attention."

Perhaps, but in the new world of AOL Time Warner it is probably not premature to write Ted Turner's business obituary.

The first word that Robert Edward Turner III uttered was not "mama" or "dada" but "pretty." It was an odd choice, since he also remembers that, growing up in the shadow of the Second World War, he yearned first to be a fighter pilot with the R.A.F., and then to conquer the world, like his first hero, Alexander the Great. Turner was born in 1938 in Cincinnati; a sister, Mary Jane, was born three years later. His father, Robert Edward (Ed) Turner, Jr., ran a successful outdoor-advertising company. Ted's mother was a dutiful wife, who tried to obey her husband's wishes. Ed Turner was a charming, gifted salesman who was on the road or at work far more than he was at home. He was propelled by the memory of his own father, a cotton farmer in Mississippi, who lost his farm in the Depression and, refusing to declare bankruptcy, became a sharecropper instead. Often, Ed Turner would warn his son that Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman were Communists and that the Communists would take over America and execute anyone with more than fifty dollars in his pocket. For years, Ted never carried around more than forty-nine dollars.

Ted was obstreperous. He pulled ornaments off the Christmas tree, and smeared mud on a neighbor's sheets that were hanging out to dry. His father instructed him to read two books each week, and to eat every vegetable on his plate. Ed was often drunk, and would fly into a rage when Ted disobeyed; he frequently beat him, sometimes with a wire coat hanger. He would untwist it until it was straight, like a whip, and then hit his son, exclaiming, "This hurts me more than it does you." When this didn't seem to tame Ted, he reversed the punishment, pulling down his pants, lying down, and ordering his son to administer the lashings. With tears streaming down his cheeks, Ted obeyed. "It was the most painful thing I ever did in my entire life," he recalls, giving his father credit for understanding that "that would be a more effective punishment than him beating me."

Apparently, it was not effective enough; when Ed Turner joined the Navy, during the Second World War, and was assigned to the Gulf Coast, the family joined him—except for young Ted, who stayed with his grandmother and was eventually sent to boarding school in Cincinnati. Ted was miserable; he was impossible to control, and was suspended. When he was about ten, the family moved to Savannah, Georgia. Intent on teaching his son obedience, Ed Turner became more formal, no longer hugging him but greeting him with a handshake. He sent Ted off to the Georgia Military Academy, outside Atlanta, and then to the military program at the McCallie School, in Chattanooga.

Ted read non-stop, committing poems

and military history to memory, but he hated boarding school. "I was hurt," he told me. "I didn't want to go off so young. It was like a prison. You couldn't leave the campus. There was a bell when you got out of bed in the morning and a bell to go to meals, and a bell to go to bed at night." And, he added, "there were no parents there—no mom, no dad." Yet Turner defends and even romanticizes his harsh father, saying that he deliberately instilled insecurity: "He thought that people who were insecure worked harder, and I think that's probably true. I don't think I ever met a superachiever who wasn't insecure to some degree. A superachiever is somebody that's never satisfied."

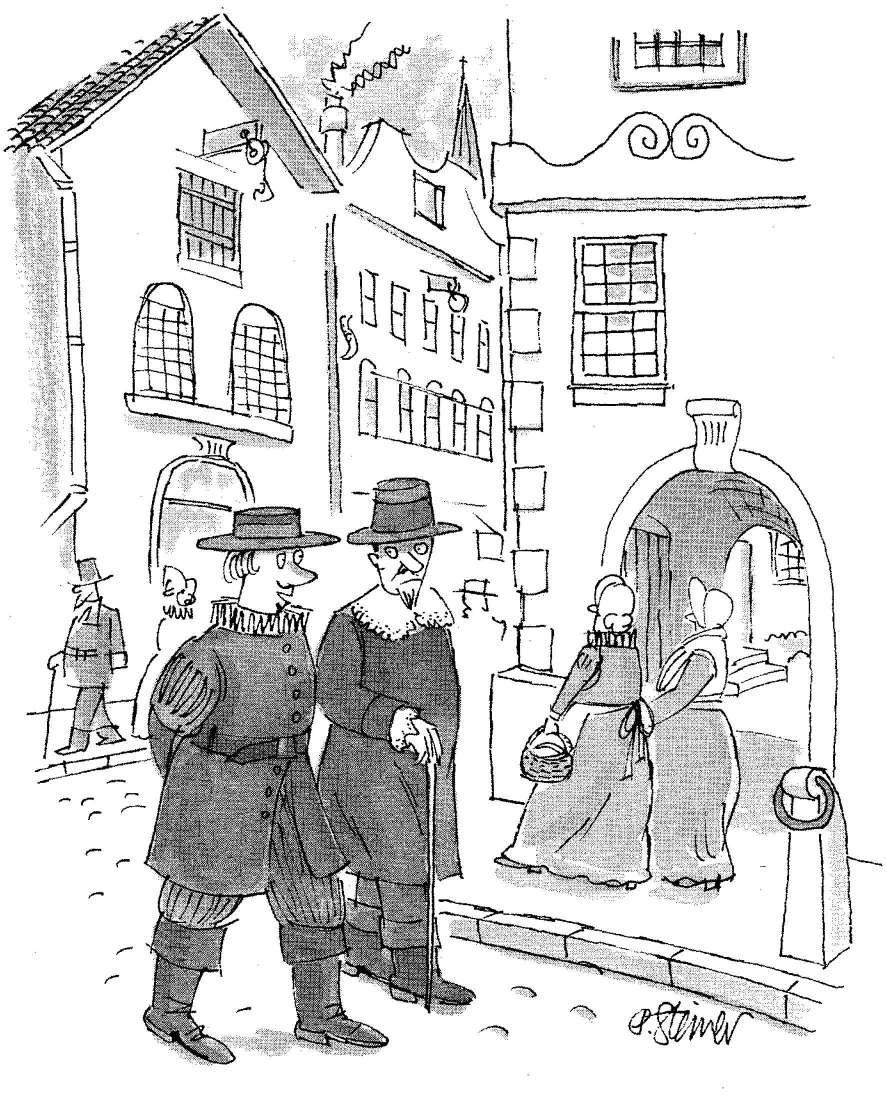
By the time he was a teen-ager, Ted knew that he did not want to join his father's business. He was religious, and he decided that he was going to be a missionary. Then his sister became ill. He was fifteen when Mary Jane, who was twelve, contracted systemic lupus erythematosus, a disease in which the immune system attacks the body's tissue. She was racked with pain and constantly vomiting, and her screams filled the house. Ted regularly came home and held her hand, trying to comfort her. He prayed for her recovery; she prayed to die. After years of misery, she succumbed. Ted lost his faith. "I was taught that God was love and God was powerful," he says, "and I couldn't understand how someone so innocent should be made or allowed to suffer so."

The experience transformed Turner. "I decided I wanted to be a success," he says. Though he wasn't much of an athlete, he became a good boxer; the same tenacity that enabled him to resist his father helped him in boxing, because, he recalls, "I could take punishment." To impress his father, he took up debating and excelled at it; as a senior, he won the state high-school debating championship. He also became an accomplished sailor.

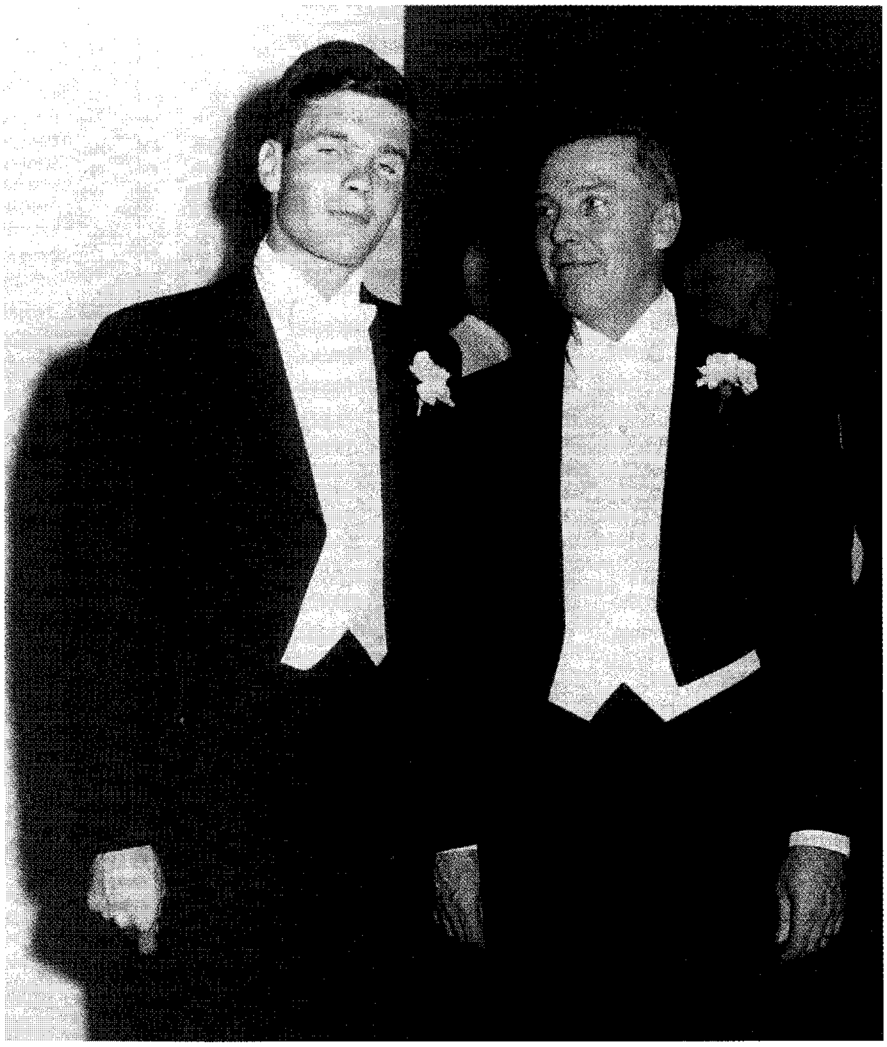
Ed Turner was constantly giving his son instructions: where he should work during the summers, whom he should date, how he had to save to pay his college tuition. When Ted was at home, his father even charged him room and board. Expecting his son to attend Harvard, he was displeased when a rejection letter arrived. Ted was accepted at Brown, and that mollified his father, but not for long. According to a detailed account of Ted's Brown years in Robert and Gerald Jay Goldberg's "Citizen Turner," he wasn't much of a student. He gambled. He got into noisy arguments, defending the South, defending war as a means of ridding the planet of the weak, defending nationalism. He delighted in irritating liberal sensibilities. He kept a rifle in his room, and sometimes poked it out the dormitory window and fired off a round or two. He partied and drank too much. He talked about dates as if he were describing military conquests. But Ted could be charming and funny, and, as is still the case, he was hard to miss. He joined the Brown sailing team, and was named the best freshman sailor in New England.

His father, who had divorced Ted's mother in 1957 and was now remarried, tried, in his son's word, to "micromanage" his life, to treat college as preparation for a business career. When Ted chose to major in classics, his father wrote angrily:

> I am appalled, even horrified, that you have adopted Classics as a Major. As a matter of fact, I almost puked on the way home today. . . . I am a practical man, and for the life of me I cannot possibly understand why you should wish to speak Greek. With whom will you communicate in Greek? I have read, in recent years, the deliberations of Plato and Aristotle, and was interested to learn that the old bastards had minds which worked very similarly to the way our minds work today. I was amazed that they had so much time for deliberating and thinking and was interested in the kind of civilization that would permit such useless deliberation. . . . I suppose everybody has to be a snob of some sort, and I suppose you will feel that you are distinguishing yourself from the herd by becoming a Classical snob. I can see you drifting into a bar, belting down a few, turning around to a guy on the stool next to you—a contemporary billboard baron from Podunk, Iowa—and say-



"I got out of tulips after the market collapsed, but I'm slowly getting back in. Especially pink ones."



Clockwise from above: Turner with his second wife, Jane Smith; his father; his first wife, Judy Nye; Jane Fonda; at his ranch; and with Frédérique D'arragon.

> ing, "Well, what do you think about old Leonidas?"... It isn't really important what I think. It's important what you wish to do with the rest of your life. I just wish I could feel that the influence of those odd-ball professors and the ivory towers were developing you into the kind of man we can both be proud of.... I think you are rapidly becoming a jackass, and the sooner you get out of that filthy atmosphere, the better it will suit me.

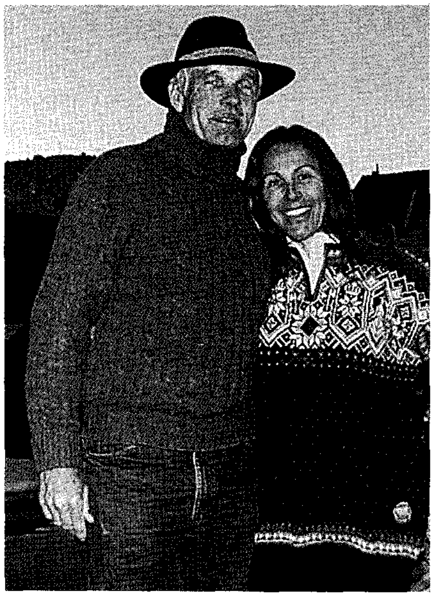
Agitated by the letter, Ted brought it to the Brown student newspaper, the *Daily Herald*, and, as Porter Bibb says in his biography "Ted Turner: It Ain't As Easy As It Looks," the paper published it anonymously.

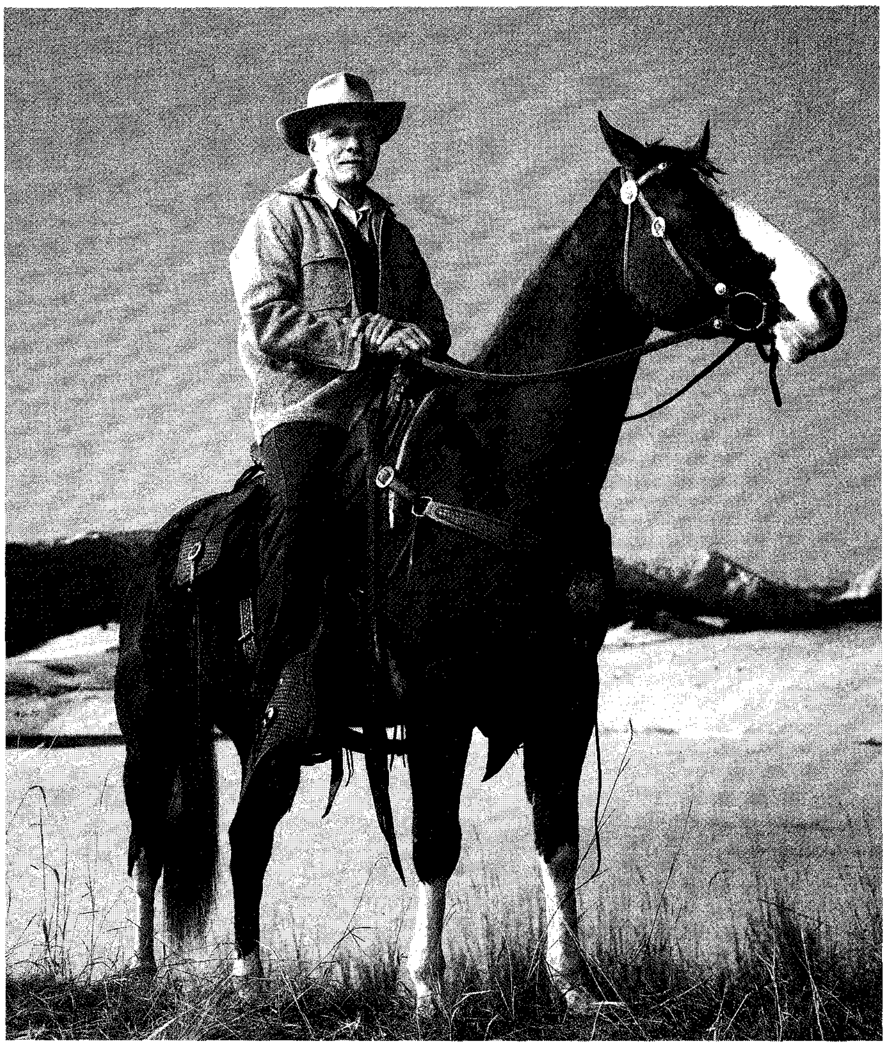
In his junior year, Ted was expelled for smuggling a coed into his room. In fact, it was just the last straw, and, if Ed Turner was unhappy with his son's behavior, he was glad to have him come home and enter the billboard business. Despite their feuds, Ted now rarely questioned that he would work for his father. "I liked the advertising business," he said. Father and son were similar in many ways. Both were persuasive and headstrong. Both viewed seduction as a game of conquest. Both were self-centered. Both were political conservatives. Both liked whiskey. Both battled moments of depression. And both had unsuccessful marriages.

In 1960, after a brief stint in the Coast Guard, Ted married Julia (Judy) Gale Nye, the daughter of a prominent sailor from Chicago, and they moved to Macon. A year later, when she gave birth to Laura Lee, Ted, intent on winning the America's Cup, was off sailing. Marriage did not stop him from carousing, and he often returned home late at night, as if in a *Playboy* cartoon, with lipstick on his collar and alcohol on his breath. Two years after they were married, Judy filed for divorce. Then she discovered that she was pregnant again, and the couple reconciled. In May of 1963, Robert Edward Turner IV was born. Ted soon returned to his earlier habits, and finally, after a sailing competition in which he rammed his wife's boat in order to win, Judy decided that the marriage was finished.

Turner was a Barry Goldwater supporter, and he met his second wife, Jane Smith, who was a stewardess based in Atlanta, at a campaign rally. They married in June of 1964, and had three children in short order—Rhett, Beauregard, and Jennie. In 1967, Ted also got custody of the two children from his first marriage. The Turners lived in Atlanta, and Ted was not much better as a father than he was as a husband. He was "a dictator," Laura, who is now close to her father, recalls. Because of the sailing season, he was rarely home for Christmas, and because of work the family took few vacations together. In the summer, because Turner refused to install air-conditioning, the family baked. But, Ted says, recalling his own father, "I treated my children entirely differently than he did. I let them make a lot of their decisions for themselves." Yet he had sudden mood changes, and his temper frightened the children. They were expected to be in bed by 8 P.M. and at

LEFT: COURTESY TED TURNER; BOTTOM RIGHT: WADE SPEES





TOP LEFT: STEVE GRANITZ/RETNA; BOTTOM LEFT: ARGENPRESS/SIPA; RIGHT: MARTIN SCHOELLER/SABA

breakfast before eight. Good manners were required at the table. Television was limited. If they wanted soda or candy on the weekend, they collected empty bottles to earn the money.

While Ted Turner concentrated on mastering the outdoor-advertising business, his father was trying to escape depression; he drank, smoked three packs of cigarettes a day, and took a huge assortment of pills. In 1961, Ed Turner had sought treatment, and he spent a summer at the Silver Hill psychiatric hospital, in New Canaan, Connecticut. A year after he left Silver Hill, Ed Turner made the boldest business decision of his career, paying four million dollars for the Atlanta, Richmond, and Roanoke divisions of General Outdoor Advertising. Instantly, Turner Advertising was the foremost outdoor-advertising company in the South.

Ted was convinced that they had scored a coup. His father, though, was strangely morose, worrying that he lacked the resources to absorb such a large company. He returned to Silver Hill, and from there placed a panicky call to a friend in the outdoor-advertising business and pressed him to buy the new divisions for the amount they had cost him. The friend, not wanting to take advantage, threw in a fifty-thousand-dollar bonus. Ed Turner still could not shake his depression. "I don't want to hurt anybody. I just feel like I've lost my guts," he wrote to his wife. On March 5, 1963, Ed Turner had breakfast with his wife, went upstairs, placed a .38-calibre silver pistol in his mouth, and pulled the trigger. He was fifty-three.

His son later told Christian Williams, who wrote an early biography of him, that he and his father "had terrible, terrible fights. It was after one of those fights—we disagreed about how the business should be run—that he blew his brains out." The message was clear: Ed Turner abandoned his dreams of business glory because he felt inadequate, and because his son wasn't up to the task, either. The son, who was twenty-four, had to face another message: perhaps he was responsible. For all that, Ted Turner says that he lost his "best friend."

In the weeks and months after his father's suicide, Turner was distraught yet surprisingly focussed. He told his father's advisers and bankers that Ed Turner had not known what he was doing when he resold the company divisions he had just bought; that he, Ted, would sue if necessary to reclaim them; and that, in any case, he was prepared to run the entire enterprise. His ferocity and his mastery of the numbers were impressive. The bankers came through with the loans, and his father's friend sold back the divisions he had bought.

Soon after that, Turner began to dream of going beyond the billboard business, of building a media empire. His first venture came five years after his father's suicide, in 1968, when he bought a Chattanooga radio station, WAPO. Within a year, he had also acquired radio stations in Jacksonville and Charles-

FIRST JOB BY NICHOLSON BAKER

COINS OF THE REALM

In 1973, when I was sixteen, I got a job in building maintenance at Midtown Plaza, Rochester's then flourishing downtown shopping mall. I spent a day pulling nails from two-by-fours—loudly whistling Ravel's "Bolero" while I worked, so that the secretaries would know that I knew a few things about French music—before being apprenticed to the mall's odd-job man, Bradway. Bradway taught me how to move filing cabinets (you walk with them on alternating corners, as if you were slow dancing with them), how to snap a chalk line, how to cut curves in Sheetrock, how to dig a hole for a no-parking sign, and how to change the fluorescent bulbs in the ceiling of the elevator. He wore funny-looking glasses, and he sang "Paper Doll" to the secretaries, embarrassing them and me, but he was a decent person and a good teacher. For reasons I still don't understand, he was disliked by one of the carpenters in the maintenance department, who referred to him as "a proctologist's delight."

One day, Bradway told me he was going to teach me how to sweep up the pennies in the fountain. Midtown Plaza's fountain had a fifteen-foot-high inward-curving spray, and there were four or five low mushroom fountains to one side, lit from below; the water went around and under a set of stairs rising up to the mall's second level. People sometimes threw pennies in from the landing on the stairs and while standing at the railing on the second level, but mostly they tossed them in as they walked past. I had thrown in pennies myself. The thing to do when you wished on a penny was to memorize where it landed. It was the penny with the two very tarnished pennies just to the left of it—or no, was it one of the ones in that similar constellation a foot away? Every day, you could check on your penny, or the penny you had decided must be your penny, to see how it was doing.

So when Bradway said that I—a maintenance worker earning two-fifty an hour—was going to be sweeping up all the coins, I experienced a shiver of mastery. We went down to the basement, and I put on a pair of rubber fly-fishing boots. Bradway showed me the switch that turned off the pump for the fountains. I pressed it. There was a clunk.

Back upstairs, the water was almost still. I stepped over the marble ledge, squeegee broom in hand, and began pushing around other people's good luck. The pennies, moved along by the squeegee, formed planar sheets of copper, arranging themselves to fit into each other's adjoining curves, until finally a row would push up, make peaks, and flip back, forming a second layer, and then a third, and eventually there was a sunken reef of loose change in one corner of the pool. "That's it, just keep sweeping them toward the pile," Bradway said. He gave me a black bucket with holes in it, and, rolling up my sleeves as high as I could, I used a dustpan to scoop up the change and pour it, entirely underwater, into the bucket. The sound was of anchor chains at the bottom of the sea.

Bradway went off while I swept further afield, and I looked out with a haughty but weary look at the people walking by: I was the maintenance man, standing in the water; they were just pedestrians in a mall. "Are you going to keep all that money?" a man said to me. I said no, it was going to charity. "I'm a good charity, man," he said. By the time I got the strays out into the open blue tilework and scooted them along in a cloud of pale, sluggish dust, I felt like a seasoned cowboy, bringing the herd home.

Bradway came back, and together we pulled the black bucket out, letting the water pour from the holes. It was extremely heavy. We set it on a two-wheeled dolly. "Feel that slime?" said Bradway. I nodded. "The bank won't take the money this way." We went down the freight elevator to a room in the basement, where he showed me an old yellow washing machine. Together we dumped the money in, and Bradway turned the dial to regular wash; the coins went through a slushy-sounding cycle. After lunch, I scooped out the clean money and wheeled it to the bank. As I'd been told, I asked to see Diane. Diane led me to the vault, and I slid the black bucket off the dolly next to some dirty sacks of quarters.

Every week that summer, I cleaned the fountain. Every week, there was new money there to sweep up. I flipped more coins in myself; one nickel I deliberately left in place for a few weeks while I maneuvered away all the pennies around it, so that my wish-money would have more time to gather momentum. Eventually, I swept it along with the rest, trying, however, to follow its progress as a crowd of coins lined up like piglets on the sow of the rubber blade. There were momentary collisions and overturnings, and the wavelets of the water added confusion. My coin slid over another coin and fell to the right, and then, as I pushed them all into the corner pile, a mass of money avalanched over it, and it was lost to view. ♦

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

ton. In 1970, he acquired his first television property, Channel 17 in Atlanta, a money-losing UHF station. He borrowed heavily to make the purchase, and the consensus was that he had been outsmarted; although he changed the station's call letters from WJRJ to WTCG, it looked as if he would lose everything. "Working in UHF television at that time was like being in the French Foreign Legion," recalls Terry McGuirk, who was hired by Turner the summer after his junior year at Middlebury College, and who became Turner's protégé. The staff consisted of about thirty employees; for many, the pay was thirty dollars a week and all you could eat. The finances became even more dire when Turner acquired a second TV station, in Charlotte. McGuirk, who was dispatched to sell ads, says that the new station was costing Turner fifty thousand dollars a month. And a good deal of the time Turner was away sailing, a hobby that commanded nearly as much of his attention as business did. But he managed to motivate his tiny staff, just as he did his sailing crew.

Turner charmed and wheedled to get ads, and he introduced inexpensive programming. News was alien to the man who would become identified with CNN—too negative, Turner complained—and at first it was aired only in the early-morning hours. Turner programmed "The Mickey Mouse Club" and Three Stooges movies and every sports event he could find. Although profits were slim, he became obsessed with broadcasting. He wanted a national network, and, since he couldn't afford a broadcast network (there were none for sale, anyway), he discovered a way to get one on the cheap. In 1975, Gerald Levin, of Home Box Office, which was then a regional cable service, owned by Time Inc., that offered movies to subscribers, decided that he could transform HBO into a national pay-TV network by distributing it over the newly launched RCA satellite: all he had to do was get cable operators to invest a hundred thousand dollars in a thirty-foot dish. At the time, broadcast-TV stations like Turner's Channel 17 relied on microwave signals that bounced off transmission towers. Turner, however, had a tower that was twice the height of most other such towers, and his station already reached beyond its broadcast range, of forty miles, to five states. But a network of towers was expensive, and the signals were impeded by tall buildings and deteriorated over long distances.

Cable had other advantages: unlike broadcasting, which produced revenue solely from advertising, it had monthly subscription charges. But cable in those days had little programming of its own; it had started as a way to improve TV reception, and then became a way to extend television to rural communities that didn't get broadcast signals. Turner saw an opportunity. With satellites, as HBO had demonstrated, signals could be sent across the nation, and so Channel 17 could become a cable network. He renamed the new network TBS—Turner Broadcasting System.

Turner was taking not only a huge business risk—he borrowed heavily—but a political risk, too, since he needed approval from the Federal Communications Commission. The broadcast networks and the local TV stations were implacably opposed. They were joined by the Hollywood studios, which complained that Turner would be paying a local price for their movies and exhibiting them nationally, and by professional sports teams, which said that Turner was stealing their product.

Turner and others in the cable industry saw the broadcast networks and their allies as a cartel that had induced the government to impose regulations crippling cable's ability to compete. Cable conventions at that time were like revival meetings, with speaker after speaker fervently denouncing this satan. As a master salesman, Turner knew that Congress had long been concerned about the pervasive power of Hollywood and the three big New York-based broadcast networks, and he assured congressional leaders that he, a broadcaster, was trying to help the nascent cable industry provide consumers with more choices—and better choices, too, since his station would not, he vowed, program violent, sexually explicit movies, like Martin Scorsese's "Taxi Driver." Of course, viewers would not be receiving first-class alternative fare, since Turner was offering movies and sports in the evening and "Lassie," "The Munsters," and "The Flintstones," among other programs, during the day. Nevertheless, the F.C.C. allowed tiny Channel 17 to become the Superstation, an overnight rival to the networks.

Cable was starved for programming, and TBS and HBO became its building blocks. To insure continuous baseball coverage that could not be taken off his Superstation, Turner, in 1976, bought the Atlanta Braves; although he paid a bargain price of ten million dollars, he went into debt to do it. He attended most Braves home games: he ran out onto the field to lead the fans in "Take Me Out to the Ballgame"; sitting behind the Braves dugout, he'd spit Red Man tobacco juice into a cup and swill beer, in hot weather peeling off his shirt; when a Brave hit a home run, he'd jump over the railing and rush to the plate to greet him; he played cards with his players and insisted that they call him Ted. Ralph Roberts, the founder of Comcast Communications, which is now the nation's third-largest cable company, says of TBS, "We thought it was the greatest thing in the world." Roberts was charmed by Turner; others were not. Turner would drop to the floor, histrionically, to beg for business; once, telling a roomful of Southern ladies how to woo advertisers, he explained, "My daddy said, 'If advertisers want a blow job, you get down on your knees.' "

He became Captain Outrageous. Celebrating his victory in the 1977 America's Cup, he swigged almost a whole bottle of aquavit that had been given to him by the Swedish team, and then, drinking champagne, pulled his shirt up to his neck and yelled at some nearby women, "Show me your tits!" Earlier that same year, his second as a team owner, the baseball commissioner, Bowie Kuhn, suspended him for the season, accusing him of tampering when he tried to sign a player who was under contract to another team.

Turner tales became legendary. While racing in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1978, Turner coaxed the French-born Frédérique D'arragon—then, as now, a girlfriend—to wait until their boat came to the reviewing stand and then jump naked into the water. Jimmy Carter remembers that when he became President, in 1977, he invited his fellow-Georgian to state dinners. "He was very raucous," Carter said. "He was loud, and he interrupted sedate proceedings." Carter was amused by Turner. Dick Cavett, on the other hand, was not. During a taping of his television show, Cavett pressed him: "You are a colorful, boisterous, sometimes inebriated playboy type. Maybe it's an act or it's created by the press, but that is your image. You wouldn't deny that, would you?"

"I have heard that you are a little twinkle-toed TV announcer," Turner responded. "Would you deny that?"

By the late seventies, Turner was rich, and although he still behaved in unconventional ways, he had become more serious. He had great respect for Jimmy Carter, and no doubt Carter's more liberal views affected Turner's own politics. He began to liken himself to "an ambassador for good will." He saw himself as a rabbit—"a rabbit that's small and fast. All my big competitors were like a pack of wolves, and they were all chasing me, but I was fast enough to be out in front of them." The emblem of the rabbit was Turner's brand-new Cable News Network.

Reese Schonfeld, a creative and prickly executive, had discussed the cable-news-channel idea with Turner in 1978, and he served as CNN's first president. Turner, who was generous with his money but cheap in sharing credit with Schonfeld, told cable operators that CNN would do for the cable industry what Edward R. Murrow and Huntley-Brinkley had done for network news. CNN would make news the star, not overpaid anchors, and it would not be clotted with ads. Schonfeld travelled the country to sign up cable operators. And at most cable conventions there was Ted Turner, to make a speech and inspire his cable army.

The new cable network, based in Atlanta, made its official début on June 1, 1980, with three military bands striking up music and a nervous Ted Turner standing at a lectern in a blue blazer. Sporting Elvis sideburns, he began by reciting "a little poem that was written by Ed Kessler," and that reflected CNN's mission: "To act upon one's convictions while others wait, to create a positive force in a world where cynics abound, to provide information to people when it wasn't available before." A band played "The Star-Spangled Banner," and when it ended Turner whooped "Awww-riiight!" and CNN went live.

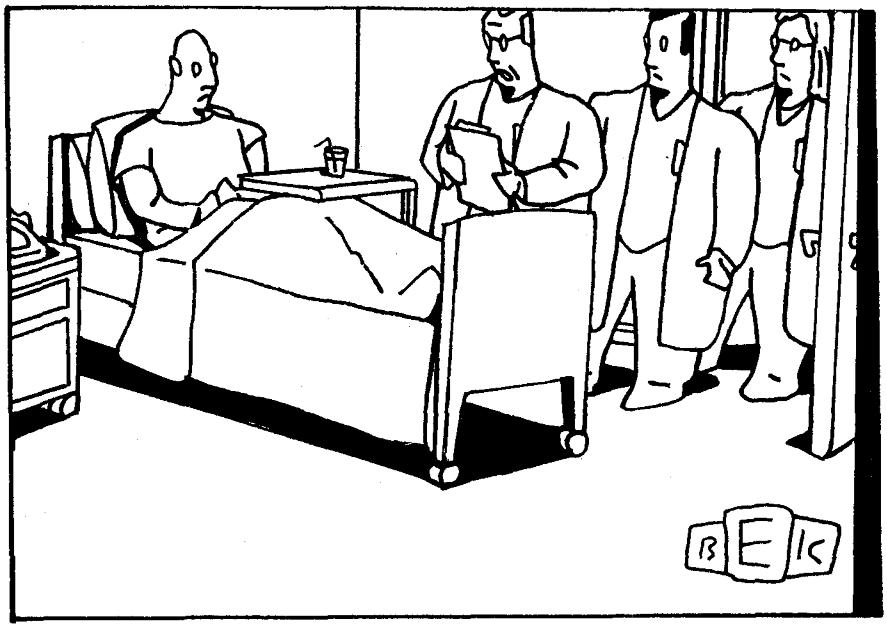
CNN's production values were initially amateurish—"video wallpaper," or "talking heads," network news executives sneered—and ratings were poor. Most of the work of building a staff, imposing news values, and winning clearance from local cable operators was taken on by Schonfeld. But Turner was the galvanizer, the risk-taker. He practically lived in his office, hurrying through the newsroom and rarely spending more than thirty seconds with anyone. Nick Charles, a sports reporter who was one of the first people to be hired at CNN, recalls that most of the staff worked six or seven days a week and relied on portable toilets outside, and that employees would show up in the morning and see Ted, wearing a robe or wrapped in a towel, wandering out of his office, where he slept on a Murphy bed, to retrieve coffee from the newsroom. Once, Steve Heyer remembers, he walked into Turner's office and the great man was sitting at his desk stark naked. "Don't get up!" someone exclaimed. Nick Charles recalls, "He was much more than a cheerleader. He was the kind of guy you'd want to run through a wall for."

At first, many CNN employees were dubious. Daniel Schorr, a former CBS correspondent, who was hired early on, was worried every time he heard Turner extoll the importance of good news, as if what he wanted were more happy news. Worry spread when, in 1982, Turner, frustrated by Schonfeld's close-to-the-vest management style and ownerlike ego, abruptly fired him. Lou Dobbs, another CNN pioneer, who was a business-news anchor, remembered Turner as a drunken sailor and thought that he might not be "the right fellow to lead the effort." Dobbs was afraid that Turner was more an "eccentric" than a "visionary"—until he got to know him. "He is a natural-born leader," Dobbs says. "I once asked him his definition of a leader. He said, 'A leader has the ability to create infectious enthusiasm.' "

CNN started as an all-day, mostly live, and mostly domestic news service. But it strayed to cover Cuba's 1981 May Day parade and a speech by Fidel Castro, and that led to an invitation for Turner to visit the island. Turner, who had never been to a Communist country, and whose politics continued to soften, was curious about it, and the next year he accepted the invitation. For the better part of four days, the Cuban Communist and the Southern conservative hung out, smoking cigars, attending a baseball game, duck hunting, visiting schools, discussing politics, and night-clubbing. To an associate, Turner said, "Fidel ain't a Communist. He's a dictator, just like me." He learned that Castro watched CNN's signal from southern Florida; ever the salesman, he persuaded Castro to tape a promotional spot. Castro, in

"Look at it this way—this is the first day of the rest of your money."

turn, urged Turner to take his news service worldwide. "Ted came back fired up," Eason Jordan remembers. International news quickly expanded—CNN sent its first signal to Asia in late 1982 and to Europe in 1985. Jordan was twenty-eight when he started running CNN's foreign-news coverage.



"We did find a creative bone in your body, but, unfortunately, it was very untalented."

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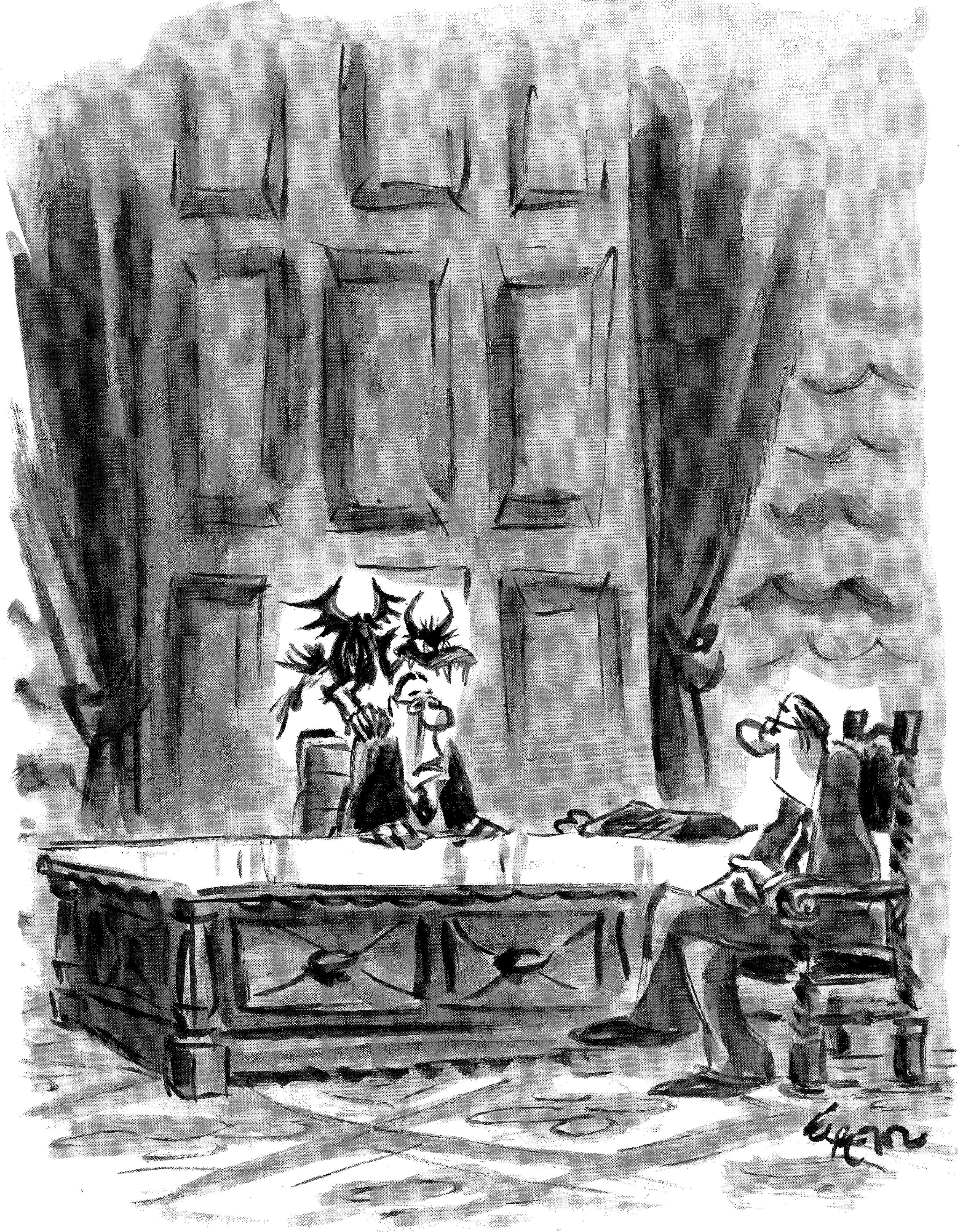
In the beginning, the broadcast networks refused to include CNN in their pooled coverage of White House events. Turner filed a federal lawsuit in Atlanta against the "cartel" and the Reagan Administration, claiming violations of the antitrust laws and of CNN's rights under the First Amendment. To build support for CNN in Congress, Turner spent thirteen thousand dollars to install a satellite dish for the House and cabled the office of each member of Congress. Because CNN had twenty-four hours of news to fill, a congressman had a much better chance of being seen there. Ted Turner would win the battle for public support; more important, in a landmark ruling in the spring of 1982, the Atlanta court declared in CNN's favor, and by the mid-eighties CNN's triumph was apparent.

One reason for Turner's success—with CNN, with the Superstation, with buying sports teams to supply cable programming—is identified by Bob Wright, the president and C.E.O. of NBC. "He sees the obvious before most people do," Wright says. "We all look at the same picture, but Ted sees what you don't see. And after he sees it, it becomes obvious to everyone." As the networks shrank their overseas bureaus, CNN expanded. It invested in "flyaway" portable satellite dishes, costing about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars each, that could be carried in a suitcase and used anywhere in the world to "uplink" to a satellite. Turner wanted to grow bigger still. Although Turner Broadcasting had a mere two hundred and eighty-two million dollars in revenue in 1984, and the New York banks spurned his request for credit, in 1985 Turner got junk-bond financing that enabled him to make a $5.4-billion offer for a broadcast network: CBS.

Knowing that he was an underdog, Turner sought political support from Senator Jesse Helms, of North Carolina. Helms had mounted a campaign against CBS's "liberal bias," and he encouraged Turner to meet with a group called Fairness in Media, which had sent letters to a million conservatives begging them to buy CBS stock and "become Dan Rather's boss." Up North, many in the media expressed horror at the prospect of Turner, whom they regarded as an unsophisticated Southerner—a redneck—owning "the Tiffany network." Thomas Wyman, who was the C.E.O. of CBS, questioned Turner's moral fitness to run a network and accused him of being in bed with ideological groups, although he didn't name any. Wyman and CBS, hoping to block Turner, welcomed the "white knight" financing of Laurence Tisch, of the Loews Corporation, and Tisch stealthily gained control of CBS.

By the mid-eighties, however, Turner was not the provincial portrayed by CBS. As he sought to build CNN overseas, he became much more of an internationalist; he was more concerned with saving the environment, eradicating poverty, and ending the Cold War. He met and became friends with Jacques Cousteau, the primatologist Jane Goodall, the civil-rights leader Andrew Young, and the environmentalist Russell Peterson. "I was hanging around with people who cared about the future of the planet, both of the human race and of the environment," he says. "And they had an impact on me." Although he had once been a smoker, he now refused to hire anyone who smoked. "I figured any young person who's dumb enough to smoke is too dumb to work at CNN or TBS," he says. In 1985, he established the Better World Society, whose purpose was to subsidize documentaries on the dangers of environmental pollution, nuclear weapons, and the population explosion. He also began to proselytize for an end to the Cold War. After the United States boycotted the 1980 Summer Olympics, following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, and the Soviet Union withdrew from the 1984 Los Angeles Games, Turner financed and launched the Goodwill Games to foster athletic competition between the United States and the U.S.S.R. During this time, Turner even thought of running for President.

But to those who didn't know him—and even to some members of his board, who did—Turner was still often seen as Captain Outrageous. They were tired of hearing that he was going to own a network or a Hollywood studio, that he was going to make movies like "Gone with the Wind." So when, in August of 1985, Turner, without fully consulting his board, bought, for a billion and a half dollars, the M-G-M film studio, its Cul-



"One day I just reached deep down inside myself and there he was."

ver City lot, and its library of more than thirty-five hundred motion pictures the consensus was that he had overpaid. The financing for his impulsive decision was arranged by Drexel Burnham's junk-bond king, Michael Milken, who was representing both Turner and the owner of M-G-M, Kirk Kerkorian. Milken reduced the amount of cash Turner needed by persuading Kerkorian to accept stock in Turner Broadcasting. The difficulty was that Turner found himself with two billion dollars' worth of debt; within three months, he was forced to sell the studio and other parts of M-G-M back to Kerkorian, for three hundred million dollars.

He kept the film library, however, and he brilliantly exploited this asset. The movies became a source of cheap television programming, and Turner created new cable networks—such as TNT (Turner Network Television), launched in 1988, and TCM (Turner Classic Movies), in 1994—to showcase them. Looking back, he is pleased with himself for having done this "right under the networks' noses" and for having managed to grow "from one-thousandth the size of the networks to two and a half times bigger." He says, "They laughed at me when I started with CBS. They laughed at me when I started CNN. They laughed at me when I bought the Braves. They laughed at me when I bought the Hawks. They laughed at me when I bought M-G-M. I spent a lot of time thinking, and I did not fear, because of my classical background. When Alexander the Great took control when his dad died, he was twenty years old. He took the Macedonian Army, which was the best army in the world at the time, and conquered Greece, got the Greeks to all join with him, and then marched across the Hellespont and invaded Asia. They didn't even know where the world ended at that time. And he was dead at thirty-three, thirteen years later. He kept marching. He hardly ever stopped. And he never lost a battle."

Turner did lose battles, even if they were within the company. Kerkorian, it was revealed, had a stipulation that if Turner did not reduce his debt within six months he would have to pay Kerkorian in TBS stock, and Turner worried that Kerkorian could soon gain control of his company. On top of this, companies like Rupert Murdoch's were turning a raptor's eye on the debt-ridden Turner empire. To avoid losing everything, Turner, in 1987, looked to a consortium of thirty-one cable companies—in particular, T.C.I. and Time Inc.'s cable subsidiary—for a bailout. In return for more than five hundred million dollars in cash, Turner ceded more than one-third ownership to them; he also granted the cable executives seven of fifteen board seats and an effective veto over any expenditure exceeding two million dollars. "In hindsight, you could say that Ted lost his company," Terry McGuirk says. "But, at the time, it was in many ways Nirvana, because Ted partnered with his best customers." Turner, however, wanted to expand, and his new partners did not. They wanted to protect Turner's programming assets for the cable industry and keep them away from broadcast rivals. Or they wanted the assets for themselves.

Turner had watched as, in 1985 and 1986, Murdoch formed the Fox network, and CBS, NBC, and ABC got new owners. Increasingly frustrated, he began to spend even more time away from Atlanta. Whenever he wanted to do something bold—buy a studio or a network, for example—he confronted a veto from his board. Decisions about acquisitions were made by committee. One of the few acquisitions that the board approved, in 1991, and only after Turner wore board members down, was of Hanna-Barbera, whose animation library included more than a third of all the animated cartoons ever made in this country; with this library, Turner was able to create the now thriving Cartoon Network.

When it came to programming decisions, Turner remained in charge. Brad Siegel, the president of Turner's Entertainment Networks, remembers that when, in 1993, he was hired to run TNT Turner involved himself in such questions as what programs provided the proper lead-ins for 8 P.M. adult dramas. "One of the great things about Ted is that he watches everything," Siegel says. "Everything we make on the entertainment side—the pilots, the movies, the specials—Ted watches everything on tape. You always got a call." And when the ratings were poor but the program was good—as when TNT aired a "David Copperfield" movie—Turner congratulated Siegel.

Turner's most visible success came ten years after CNN went on the air—with its coverage of the Gulf War. Unlike the other networks, CNN made a financial commitment to cover any potential war from ground zero, Baghdad. Eason Jordan figured that the Iraqi communications system would be taken out in any allied air raid, so he recommended that CNN invest in a suitcase version of a satellite phone; this expenditure, of fifty-two thousand dollars, would be added to the extra millions that CNN was committed to spend to cover what might be the first live war. Tom Johnson, a former Los Angeles *Times* publisher, had taken over as president of CNN on August 1, 1990; the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait came on his second day at work. Johnson recalls going to Turner with various spending plans for war coverage. He asked Turner, "What am I authorized to spend?"

"You spend whatever you think it takes, pal," Turner said. Johnson was amazed, especially because, he recalls, "I'm not even sure he remembered my name."

Johnson posted people around the clock in Baghdad and Amman and Saudi Arabia and Israel and the White House and the Pentagon and the State Department. CNN, he says, spent twenty-two million dollars covering the war. CNN got permission from the Iraqi government to circumvent the Al Rashid Hotel switchboard and set up a four-wire telephone transmission from Baghdad to Amman, and then to Atlanta. When the United States destroyed the telephone system in Baghdad, only CNN had a telephone. When the Bush Administration urged the broadcast networks to pull their crews out of Iraq, they complied. Tom Johnson tells how he received calls from President Bush and other government officials, urging him to leave Baghdad, and how vexing this was. When he met with Turner and told him about these calls, and about two bureau chiefs who had been killed when he was at the Los Angeles *Times*, Turner was unmoved. He told Johnson, "I will take on myself the responsibility for anybody who is killed. I'll take it off of you if it's on your conscience." Johnson adds, "I, frankly, was about to order them back to Amman. I thought they'd all get killed."

No one got killed. And Turner was acclaimed as a different kind of businessman, one who thought about more than profit margins. When he commissioned a CNN documentary series, of more than twenty hours, on the Cold War, Rick Kaplan says, "his attitude was, if we break even on 'The Cold War' it would still be an enormous success." Turner understood, in a way that many corporate leaders do not, that building a brand can be expensive.

In the late eighties, Turner's personal life became happier. Jimmy Carter remembers that he was hunting and fishing with Turner at Avalon, Turner's estate in Tallahassee, Florida, when Turner read that Jane Fonda was planning to divorce Tom Hayden, the sixties activist. Turner told Carter that he had always admired Fonda, as an actor and as an outspoken liberal. "I think I'm going to ask her for a date," he said. When he called, Fonda put him off. She was not yet ready to date, she told Turner, although she was soon photographed at St. Bart's cavorting with an Italian soccer player.

Turner's second marriage had ended in 1988, after twenty-four years, three children, and many dalliances. His dating patterns conformed to his travel schedule; he took up with, among others, a Playboy bunny and the female pilot of his private plane. Turner was persistent with Fonda, and finally, in late 1989, they had their first date. It was followed by many others, including an Academy Awards ceremony, a White House dinner, a Kremlin dinner with Mikhail Gorbachev. They went horseback riding at Turner's Montana ranches; later, Turner, with Fonda by his side, would point out a cabin to visitors and announce that this was where they first made love. Both were famous, opinionated, rich, and attractive. Both loved the outdoors. Both had endured difficult childhoods under severe fathers. Neither finished college. And both felt profound guilt after the suicide of a parent; Fonda's mother had slashed her own throat at the age of forty-two. "She is fiercely focussed and full of idealism and, like all of us, full of insecurities, too. And so is he," the former Colorado senator Tim Wirth, who is a friend of both, says. "She reinforced all the best qualities in him. And she said to me the sweetest thing. She said, 'You know, Ted is the only person who's apologized more than I have.' They are really good, vulnerable people."

The couple held hands on Larry King's CNN program. They kissed in public. Turner brought her to CNN executive meetings and they sent mash notes to each other. She got him to drink less and diet more, to spruce up his wardrobe and buy art for his houses. Turner's mood swings became less pronounced; he yelled less, and he stopped taking lithium, which he had been on for about three years because, he says, "a quack" psychiatrist misdiagnosed him as "manic."

Turner and Fonda married in December of 1991 at his Florida estate, where bride and groom wore white and were surrounded by their children; they dined on fresh quail that Fonda had shot herself, candied yams, collard greens, and corn bread. Turner hates being alone, so Fonda moved to Atlanta. For much of the next decade, she was at his side. In Montana, Turner announced that he was getting rid of his cattle and sheep and returning the land to bison, the animals that grazed there two centuries ago. Fonda became an enthusiastic hunter. Gerald Levin, who says that he is "constitutionally opposed to killing animals," remembers how, on a visit to one of Turner's properties, he learned that Fonda had shot a deer and loaded it into a pickup truck. "I was appalled," Levin says. "It was Bambi in the back of the truck!"

In Atlanta, Turner did not live in a grand style. He poked a hole in the roof of the CNN Center building and put in a spiral staircase to connect the office to what has been called a penthouse but is really a seven-hundred-square-foot efficiency apartment, with a cramped bedroom. (One wall of the bedroom is a two-hundred-gallon saltwater fish tank, on the other side of which is the living room.) The most striking features of the apartment are a terrace, largely unused, with sweeping views of downtown (for a long while, Turner says, he "was the only downtown resident—except homeless people!"), and a photograph—one of the few on display—of Ed Turner looking up adoringly at his son. Turner had slept in his old office for a decade; this apartment allowed him to walk to work and to order room service from the Omni Hotel. To accommodate Fonda, he converted the bedroom closet into a windowless office for her—"a storage closet," Fonda called it.

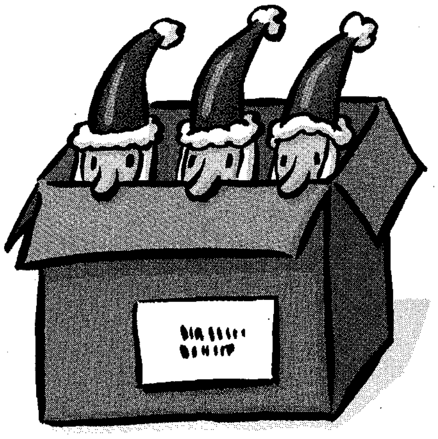
"I learned a lot from Jane," Turner says. Laura Seydel, his eldest daughter, explains that her father only reluctantly celebrated Christmas and, until he married Fonda, did not invest time in planning family gatherings. Soon Fonda and Turner and his five children and their families had reunions twice a year, and swapped Christmas presents, and attended church christenings. Laura and her husband, Rutherford Seydel II, live in Atlanta with three young children and are active in charitable activities; Seydel works as a lawyer for Turner. He and Laura think of Turner as a great man, but he was not always a great family man. After he married Fonda, however, Grandpa Turner was around more.

Turner was surprised but not displeased that Fonda attracted more attention than he did when they travelled. Fonda says that Turner was never jealous of the notice she received. "He doesn't have that kind of ego," she says. "He put me on a pedestal. He loved my successes." Although he is not an introspective or patient man, Turner probably opened up more to Fonda than he ever had to anyone else, male or female. By most accounts, the marriage was a good one, and Turner's friends and family came to adore Fonda. Laura says, "She's grandma to our kids. She filmed our firstborn." Embraced by senior female executives at Turner Broadcasting, she went on three-day all-"girls" trips. "Her influence was profound," Jimmy Carter told me. Carter smiled as he talked about Turner. "Ted has always been very hyper, in that he's constantly having visions of grandiose things. He was very restless . . . always dreaming. Ted told us he was taking sedation to calm himself. . . . When he and Jane got together, Ted became much more relaxed."

In the early nineties, Turner began worrying once more that his company was too small. The networks had persuaded the government to relax the rules that prohibited them from owning and syndicating TV programs, which is where television fortunes are made. Turner didn't own a studio, and he feared that the studios would reserve their best programs for their networks, starving Turner Broadcasting. Nor could he match the resources of NBC, now owned by G.E., in bidding for world

FIRST JOB BY JONATHAN FRANZEN

BOXING DAYS



CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

For three years when I was in high school, I was the packing boy for a German émigré couple, Erika and Armin Geyer, who operated a small business, Erika Imports, in the basement of their gloomy house in suburban St. Louis. Several afternoons a week, I left behind a pleasant-smelling world of liberty and sanity and climbed the stairs to the Geyers' dark front porch and peered into a living room where Erika and Armin and their overfed schnauzer were typically sprawled, snoring, on old wooden-ankled German chairs and sofas. The air inside was heavy with schnitzel grease and combusted cigarette. On the dining-room table were ruins of *Mittagessen:* plates flecked with butter and parsley, a partially trashed whipped-cream cake, an empty Moselle bottle. Erika, in a quilted housecoat that gaped to reveal an Old World bra or girdle, continued to snore while Armin roused himself and led me to my workstation in the basement.

Erika Imports had exclusive contracts with workshops in Communist East Germany that produced handmade giftware—enamelled Easter Bunny and Santa figurines, cunningly painted wooden eggs, de-luxe carved crèche sets, hardwood tangram puzzles, candle-propelled Christmas carrousels in sizes up to three feet tall—that gift shops throughout the central tier of states were forever mad to buy. Erika could therefore be high-handed with her customers. She sent out broken merchandise or merchandise reglued, by Armin, with insulting carelessness. She wrote her invoices in a German cursive illegible to Americans. She slashed the orders of customers who'd fallen out of favor; she said, "They want twenty—ach! I send them three."

My job in the basement consisted of assembling cardboard cartons, filling them with smaller boxes and excelsior, checking the invoices to be sure the orders were complete, and sealing the cartons with paper tape that I wetted with a sea sponge. Since I was paid better than the minimum wage, and since I enjoyed topological packing puzzles, and since the Geyers liked me and gave me lots of cake, it was remarkable how fiercely I hated the job—how I envied even those friends of mine who manned the deep-fry station at Long John Silver's or cleaned the oil traps at Kentucky Fried Chicken.

I hated, in part, the arbitrary infringements of autonomy: the Saturday afternoons torpedoed by Erika's sudden barking on the telephone, "Ja, komm immediately!" I hated the extravagant molds that grew on the sea sponge in its pan of scummy water. There was also the schnauzer and everything relating to the schnauzer. There was Armin's stertorous breathing while he pecked out U.P.S. slips on a manual Olivetti. There was Erika's powerful body odor and the powerful perfumes with which she failed to mask it. And there was the seasonal flood of Styrofoam bells and sentimental snowmen and plastic toys that recalled all too vividly the aesthetic wasteland of heartland hospital gift shops.

The main reason I envied my friends in the fast-food kitchens, though, was that their work seemed to me so wonderfully *impersonal.* They never had to see their supervisor's blue-veined stomach falling out of her housecoat, a toppled glass of cheap champagne soaking into the rug by her feet. Hamburger fragments and parsleyed potatoes weren't decaying in a dog's bowl at their job sites. Most important, their mothers did not feel sorry for their bosses.

My own mother was always after me, in the years following high school, to stop in at the Geyers' and "visit" with them when I came home from college, or to greet them after a church service, or to send them postcards when I went to Europe. My mother herself, in a spirit of Christian charity and masochism, sometimes invited the Geyers to dinner and a game of bridge, during which Erika, at escalating volumes and with a diminishing ratio of English to German, abused Armin for his sins of bidding and his crimes of cardplay, and Armin went crimson and began to bray in self-defense. Although my mother fervently believed in personal responsibility, she resorted to the most transparent ruses if I was in the house when Erika called. She handed me the phone ("Jonathan wants to say hello to you!") and then, when I tried to return the phone, she made me tell Erika that she would call her back "next week." Poor Erika and Armin, with their blood clots, their broken bones, their abrupt hospitalizations! Each step of their downward progress was faithfully reported by my mother in her letters to me. Now everyone is dead, and I wonder: Is there no escaping the personal? In twenty-five years, I have yet to find a work situation that isn't somehow about family, or loyalty, or sex, or guilt, or all four. I'm beginning to think I never will. ♦

EXTREME SELF-SERVICE
GAS
R. Chast

rights to televise the Olympics, or ABC, owned by Disney, in bidding for Monday Night Football. Turner Broadcasting got smaller compared with its competitors. The usual edge of an entrepreneur like Turner—the rabbit's advantage—seemed less vital than size.

"You need to control everything," Turner said one day recently in his New York office, his foot up against an empty coffee table. "You need to be like Rockefeller with Standard Oil. He had the oil fields, and he had the filling stations, and he had the pipelines and the trucks and everything to get the gas to the stations. And they broke him up as a monopoly. You want to control everything. You want to have a hospital and a funeral home, so when the people die in the hospital you move them right over to the funeral home next door. When they're born, you got 'em. When they're sick, you got 'em. When they die, you got 'em." He smiled and added, "The game's over when they break you up. But in the meantime you play to win. And you know you've won when the government stops you."

Turner set his sights once more on buying a studio or a TV network, or arranging a business partnership with one. With John Malone, he tried to buy Paramount. When Viacom won that competition, Turner and Malone explored purchasing ABC and then entered what Turner thought were serious negotiations to acquire NBC; again, some of the cable owners on his board opposed him. Turner says that Gerald Levin, of Time Warner (Time Inc. had merged with Warner Communications in 1990), which owned nineteen per cent of Turner's company, used that position to veto the five-billion-dollar purchase. Levin was straightforward; he said that the interests of separate companies often diverge. If Turner wanted a network, so did Levin, who was planning to launch his own network, WB.

"Everyone wanted to merge with Ted," Malone told me. "No one wanted to turn control over to Ted." This was true of Rupert Murdoch, who had once gone skiing with Turner. "He is one of the most charming people you'd ever meet," Turner says. "He told me he loved CNN the way it was and if we merged with him he wouldn't change a thing." Turner, who detests Murdoch, says that he didn't believe him. (Murdoch declined to comment.) There was a brief courtship by Bill Gates, of Microsoft; Gates thought that the power of CNN's brand could be transformed into an instantly successful online-news site. Turner thought that Microsoft's deep pockets could be used to help finance a bid for CBS. But the talks went nowhere. (Not long after this, Microsoft became a partner in MSNBC.) Meanwhile, Time Warner was determined that, if anyone was going to take over CNN and Turner's assets, it was going to be Time Warner.

When Turner is agitated, the people close to him try to prevent him from talking to reporters or giving a speech. Around this time, however, he was scheduled to speak at a National Press Club luncheon in Washington. Jane Fonda says that she was aware of the "fragility" of the relationship between Turner and Time Warner. "One false move and it would fall apart. I didn't sleep that night. Ted slept like a baby." When Turner rose to speak, he startled the audience by mentioning a story on clitorectomies that CNN had aired. Suddenly, he started comparing the mutilation of women to what Gerald Levin was doing to him. He cried out, "You talk about barbaric mutilation. Well, I'm in an angry mood. I'm angry at that, too. I'm being clitorized by Time Warner!"

"I slid under my seat," Fonda says. Levin, more diplomatically, says, "Ted is Ted. He not only says what he thinks; he gives the most amazing speeches. While I think his analogy is a little stretched, he was peeved at the time. He actually called me up, and we talked about it. It wasn't a problem."

It was a problem. Turner felt fenced in, as he does when he is handed a speech to read or when he's told that he can't do something. "My inner dream is to go to the place," he starts to explain—and suddenly breaks into the old Roy Rogers theme song—"where the West commences, gaze at the moon till I lose my senses. . . . Don't fence me in." Fences loom large in Turner's mind; he hates them, and that is one reason that his landholdings are so vast. "I'm happiest when I'm on a horse on my ranch," he says. At the same time, he can't stand to be alone.

This much is clear: by 1995, after thirty-two years in business, Turner no longer felt like a nimble rabbit. In the spring and early summer of that year, Terry McGuirk, representing Turner, tried to extricate Turner Broadcasting from Time Warner. "I spent about six months negotiating an exit from Time Warner and doing a deal with John Malone," McGuirk recalls. But, much as Turner admired Malone, he feared placing CNN in the hands of such a committed conservative. He was also concerned about Malone's business partnerships with Murdoch. Turner's own biases clearly infected CNN. It was an international network that slavishly covered the United Nations, from whose vocabulary, by Turner's dictate, the term "foreign news" was banished, that aired documentaries on subjects Turner cared about. People at CNN undoubtedly knew what the boss wanted. But CNN was not used to punishing Turner's foes, as Murdoch's newspapers sometimes did to Murdoch's foes. Turner "never once had me pull a story," Tom Johnson says. Nor, says Gail Evans, the CNN executive vice-president in charge of booking guests, did he ever order executives to help a friend. "In my twenty years here, Ted has never once asked me to book a guest," she says.

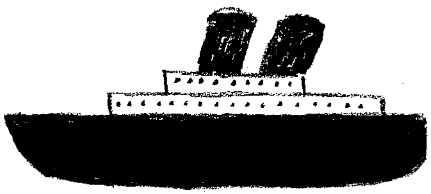
Meanwhile, Gerald Levin had concluded that his company was not big enough; he saw CNN as "the jewel" that he could link with Time Warner's magazines. Levin also knew that he had to move fast, before Turner was bought by a competitor. After talking it over with only two members of his team—Richard Parsons, the president, and Richard Bressler, the chief financial officer—Levin phoned Turner and asked if he could fly to Montana to discuss an "important" matter.

This was in August of 1995, and by then, Turner says, "I knew I was selling the company. And there was another reason I did it, too. I was a little bit tired." He was tired of his cable partners. Whatever differences he had with Levin, however, Turner knew that Levin cared deeply about journalism, for he was a proud defender of his magazines' independence. Turner also knew that a merger would connect Turner Broadcasting to a Hollywood studio, a giant music company, the country's largest magazine-publishing enterprise, and its foremost cable system.

When Levin's plane landed that morning, Jane Fonda picked him up. Although Turner had weekend house guests—including his neighbors Meredith and Tom Brokaw—he and Levin went out on the porch alone and Levin consulted ten or so points he had jotted down on a piece of paper about why Turner and Time Warner were a perfect fit. Turner Broadcasting, he said, "would be the pivot point in the center of the company," and Ted Turner would be a partner, not an employee. When he and Levin walked back into the house and Turner saw Brokaw, who had just arrived, he shouted, "Hey, buddy. We just made a deal. We're going to merge." Brokaw remembers that Levin looked startled when Turner revealed their secret.

Turner had traded a silent boss for a real one. But he still owned almost eleven per cent of the merged company, and he was not timid. He pressed Levin to sell off company airplanes and expensive American art and to curb costs at the Hollywood studio. He stepped in to stop a fifty-million-dollar sale of Warner Bros. movies to CBS, insisting that the Warner films should be offered first to its own cable networks. He won control of all new international channels, preventing Warner Bros. from spending millions to build a staff that would duplicate Turner Broadcasting's. He pushed for across-the-board budget reductions, and, as the *Wall Street Journal* reported, he even fired his own son, Robert E. (Teddy) Turner IV, who was a promotions manager for Turner Home Entertainment, bluntly warning him over a family dinner, "You're toast."

Whether by design or by accident, Levin began to use Turner for his own purposes. "The edict from Gerry Levin was 'Let Ted be Ted,' " a Levin confidant recalls. "Time Warner was buttoned up and bureaucratic. Ted was a breath of fresh air, and Gerry used that to the advantage of the company." When they met with employees, he remembers, "Ted would get up and say, 'I've got one suit. I don't spend my money on suits. I own ten per cent of the company and each dollar you waste, ten cents comes from me.' " Levin remembers that he was "very comfortable" with Ted's saying whatever he wanted, and had no illusions that it could be any other way. Levin and many other Time Warner executives were pleasantly surprised that Turner was a team player. Within the Turner Broadcasting group, Gail Evans says, Turner didn't change the way he worked, except to occasionally say, "I have to check with the boss."



No matter how many times Turner checked, however, he and Levin never grew close. They didn't communicate regularly. Turner was hurt that Levin, who is intensely private, never invited him to his home for dinner. They had business differences—Turner, for example, wanted Levin to fold the Warner Bros. television operations into Turner Broadcasting. He still resented Levin's veto of his potential purchase of NBC, believing that if he had succeeded he never would have sold his company and, he laments, "I'd have bought Time Warner instead of going the other way." Levin, who then wore a thick mustache chopped at the ends, as if he'd got tired of shaving, was reclusive and weighed his words carefully; the six-foot-one Turner towered over him and was impulsive. Levin was a schemer; Turner could become so focussed on the moment that sometimes when he got off his horse he dropped the reins and the horse galloped away, leaving him stranded. "There are probably not two more different individuals that I've ever worked with," Terry McGuirk says.

Inevitably, perhaps, after the Time Warner merger Turner and Murdoch declared war on each other. Turner said that Murdoch had to be stopped before he took over the media and used them as a weapon to advance his conservative agenda and his business interests. Turner asserts that men of good will can resolve differences between, say, Arabs and Israelis, yet he does not believe that it is possible to play Chamberlain to Murdoch's Hitler. "How do you make peace with a mega-maniac?" Turner said to me in a November, 1996, interview. "Chamberlain tried to make peace. When you've got somebody like that, I don't think there's a spark of human decency in him—except he likes his family." Turner said that Murdoch's Fox News network would do in America what Murdoch had done in China, where he removed the BBC from his satellite system in order to gain favor with the government. Murdoch's New York *Post* taunted Turner, describing him as a doormat for foreign dictators, suggesting that he was wacky, and portraying Fonda as Hanoi Jane. The battle became so ferocious that executives in both camps grew concerned; after all, Fox wanted television shows from Warner Bros. and Warner Bros. needed Murdoch's satellites. Fox would need Time Warner cable systems to carry its new cable news service. In the end, business interests outweighed principles, a truce was arranged, and, though Turner has never altered his view of Murdoch, he began to focus on other things.

With McGuirk running Turner Broadcasting day to day, Turner had more time. And, with Time Warner's stock price soaring, he also had more money. In September of 1997, he was to be honored by the United Nations Association-USA, and he had the idea of giving a billion dollars—then a third of his wealth—to the United Nations. The Turners were flying to New York when Turner told his wife what he planned. "I was extremely moved," Jane Fonda says, adding that she told her husband, "Don't you think you should talk to your lawyers first?" He did, and learned that he could not make the gift directly to the U.N.

The next day, as U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan recalls, Turner walked into Annan's office and blurted, "Hi, Kofi. I'm going to give you a billion dollars."

"I thought it was a joke," Annan says, shaking his head in wonderment.

That night, Turner announced that he would give a hundred million dollars a year for ten years to support such U.N. programs as the elimination of land mines, providing medicine for children, and easing the plight of refugees. He hired Tim Wirth, who eventually recruited a staff of thirty-two, to oversee the effort. Turner's only condition was that his money be used only minimally for administrative overhead. Annan remembers that Turner also said, "All of you billionaires out there, watch out. I'm coming after you."

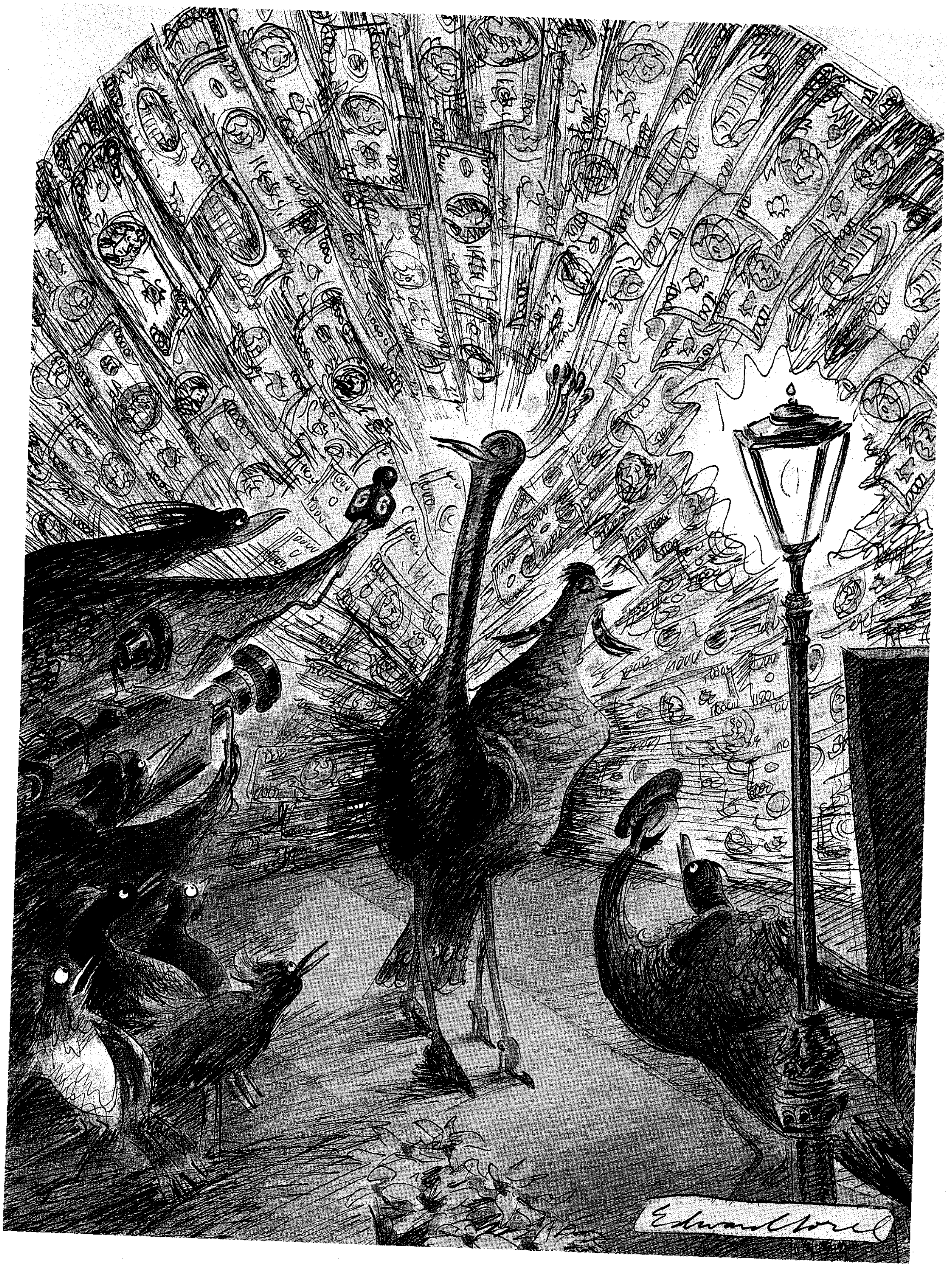
Turner has written his own version of the Ten Commandments, which he keeps on typed cards in his wallet. Without prompting, he will read from a list that includes these vows: " 'I promise to care for planet earth and all living things thereon'; 'I promise to treat all persons everywhere with dignity, respect, and friendliness'; 'I promise to have no more than one or two children'; 'I reject the use of force'; 'I support the United Nations.' " Along with his manifest generosity, Turner remains enough of a ham to seek a fitting reward: a Nobel Prize. "I've thought about it a little bit," Turner said when I asked him. "Of course I've thought of it."

Turner is easily moved to tears. He sobbed openly when Princess Diana was killed. On a trip to China in October of 1999, with Fonda reading and CNN's Eason Jordan working, Turner put on his headphones and popped in the videotape of a popular Warner Bros. cartoon movie, "The Iron Giant," the story of the friendship between a young boy and a metallic being from outer space who sacrifices himself for the sake of the planet. Jordan remembers looking over at his boss. "Tears were streaming down his face," he says. "I never saw anybody cry like that in my life." As the credits rolled, Turner called out, "That's the saddest thing I've ever seen!"

America and Russia still have some seven thousand nuclear weapons targeted at each other, and Turner is terrified that these—along with chemical and biological weapons—could fall into the wrong hands. He dismisses the Bush Administration's effort to build an anti-missile defense system as madness; the technology won't work, he says, and, in any case, it won't prevent weapons of mass destruction from being delivered by car, by ship, or in a suitcase. All these dangers are "off the radar screen," he says. "We have a huge job. Probably ninety-five per cent of the U.S. population doesn't know about it." Thus Turner's Nuclear Threat Initiative. To lead it, he has recruited former Senator Sam Nunn, who once chaired the Armed Services Committee, and who signed on only after Turner agreed to allow him a free hand. "When he gets behind something, people know it's serious, and it's going to have the energy and resources," Nunn says. Most days, Turner is a fan of the cautious Nunn; some days, he worries that Nunn is fencing him in.

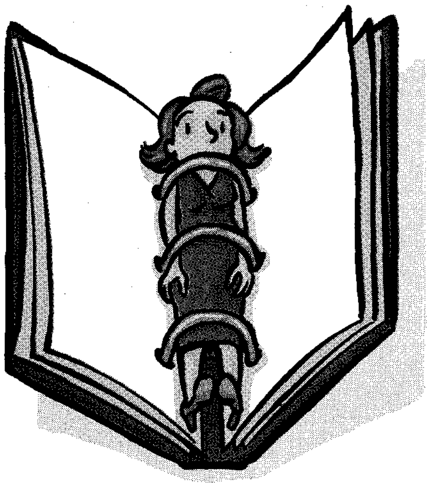
Turner's miserable last year actually began a few years ago, when Fonda began spending more time in Atlanta and less time with him. She wanted to be with her daughter Vanessa Vadim, who had moved to Atlanta and was raising a child on her own. Fonda's daughter Lulu, whose father was a Black Panther, and whom Jane took in when she and Tom Hayden ran a California camp for troubled kids, had also moved to Atlanta. In addition, Fonda had started the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, and had taken up the cause of nurturing teen mothers. During this time (according to an E! biography of Fonda that aired last fall), Fonda started attending services at the Providence Missionary Baptist Church. Turner, who alternately describes himself as an atheist and an agnostic, told me his reaction: "I had absolutely no warning about it. She didn't tell me she was thinking about doing it. She just came home and said, 'I've become a Christian.' Before that, she was not a religious person. That's a pretty big change for your wife of many years to tell you. That's a shock. I mean, normally that's the kind of thing your wife or husband would discuss with you before they did it or while they were thinking about it. . . . Obviously, we weren't communicating very well at that time."

"My becoming a Christian upset him very much—for good reason," Fonda says. "He's my husband and I chose not to discuss it with him—because he would have talked me out of it. He's a debating champion. He saw it as writing on the wall. And it was about other things. He knew my daughter was having a baby and it would take me away from him. He needs someone to be there one hundred per cent of the time. He thinks that's love. It is not love. It's babysitting. I didn't want to tell you this. We went in different directions. I grew up." Turner's daughter Laura doesn't think religion per


Edward Sorel

FIRST JOB BY LORRIE MOORE

LEGAL AIDE



In the nineteen-seventies, a new paraprofession was getting a foothold in urban law firms—that of the legal assistant, or paralegal—and some college graduates, uncertain how to pay the rent or fund their art, were venturing into this day job. In New York, these jobs paid slightly better than entry-level publishing positions but involved a level of exploitation that had actually caused the paralegals at one prominent Manhattan firm to strike. Upon graduation from college, fresh from editing the school literary magazine, perplexed at the number of people I knew going in an automatic fashion to law school (when I asked them what it was a lawyer did exactly, none of them could say), I entered this strange professional racket. I would find out what a lawyer did exactly. Others I knew at the time who also embarked on this pursuit included a woman with a just completed master's thesis on Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" (who promptly used her employer's legal services to change her last name from Schmunk) and a high-school teacher with a deep case of burnout.

Paralegals did not type! This was a kind of rallying cry. Nonetheless, I often coveted the jobs of the secretaries who did, for if they stayed after five they were paid overtime, and the kind of mindless typing they did looked restful to me. I, meanwhile, had to organize documents—which fell under the category of "exhibit preparation"—and, murmuring into a Dictaphone, to digest depositions into a kind of telegraphic code ("W can't recall Palm Too din. w/ Stutz"), reducing the testimony of deposed witnesses to what was optimistically called its "essence." I also had to make the occasional and terrifying court appearance to get an adjournment on a motion. This is now almost always done by attorneys, but in the seventies Manhattan paralegals were a cheap substitute. "In this city you would make more money as a paraplegic than as a paralegal," I was continually told by one of the associates.

I was twenty-one and mute with shyness. Up until this point in my life I had lived only in tiny towns in northern New York. The midsized, midtown firm I worked for comprised a dozen lawyers, all Jewish, all men, with names like Ira and Julian, which to a provincial ear did not even properly sound like boys' names. The staff was not Jewish: the goyim served, grumblingly and winkingly; everyone smoked and drank too much coffee. My boss, the senior partner, had apparently made his name with some big case for Sears, Roebuck in the nineteen-forties, and he had coasted on this reputation for years. With his money he bought antiquarian books, boxes of which he ripped open hungrily when they arrived, as well as some Calder prints, which he displayed in the firm's lobby and which made a big impression on me. His clients still tended to be department stores, and the case he had me working on involved the firing of the chairman of Bonwit Teller, whose makeup counters I dreamily visited during lunch hours. My boss was alternately tetchy and expansive; he spoke loudly and crazily, as all bosses, in my experience from summer jobs, did. By the time I came on board, he was also a little hard of hearing. When after two years I told him I was leaving for graduate school in writing, he thought I'd said "riding" and made a crack about horses.

But this is what my first real job brought me: my first gay friend, my first African-American friend, and what I thought of as my first grownup friend (a lawyer fifteen years my senior who remains my friend to this day). And though I envied the chicly dressed young women who worked in the Pace Gallery and at Cambridge University Press, housed in the same building and sharing the elevators, my own exquisitely wrong job did bring me, for a brief period, a life in Manhattan—improvised, lonely, exhilarating. I lived on Eighteenth Street and First Avenue, above a restaurant, and was always broke, though it was middle-class poverty—temporary, part of youth and art, more a game to be played than a true condition. It produced in me an eccentric economy. Tired from work and fearful of the subways at night, I would get into a cab and say, "Give me a dollar-fifty's worth, please," then hop out at Murray Hill. I had one suit, which I wore all week: the jacket on Monday with slacks, the skirt on Tuesday with a blouse, the jacket and skirt together—at last!—on Wednesday, and so on. I ate hamburgers but not cheeseburgers, which cost ten cents more. Still, I spent twenty-five dollars to see Bette Midler on Broadway, and another twenty-five dollars to see Liza Minnelli at Carnegie Hall. I was like a fourteen-year-old gay boy escaped to the bright, big city from the farm—which is perhaps what, in my heart, given even the slimmest of paychecks, I continue to be. ♦

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

se was the real basis of their disagreement. She says, "It was another male"—Jesus. "It took time away from him."

There were other differences, friends of both say, including Turner's libido and his insecurities. "My problem is I love every woman I meet," Turner has said. He and Fonda visited marriage counsellors and psychiatrists, to no avail. On January 4, 2000, they announced an official separation; before the announcement, Frédérique D'arragon, who is fifty-one, and has been in and out of Turner's life for more than thirty years, came back into it. She is almost a foot shorter than Turner, and prefers jeans to designer dresses. Fonda and D'arragon had lunch recently in Atlanta, and Fonda makes it clear that D'arragon will be available for Ted in ways she no longer can be: "He needs to be taken care of. She has no children. And she's loved him a long time." But travelling with Ted has taken its toll on D'arragon, just as it did on Fonda. Turner admits that the persistent travel is "driving her nuts."

A close friend says that Turner is burdened by three things: an insecurity that can be traced back to his abusive father; a manic, restless nature; and lust. "Each one of these is a great huge bear," the friend says. "Turner must wrestle with three bears, and they sometimes overwhelm him." Fonda puts it another way: "Why this guy didn't go under psychologically at age five, I don't know. It scarred him for life. It colors everything—his relationships, his anxieties . . . "

Fonda and Turner insist that they still love each other; in fact, the best I have ever seen Turner look—his white hair washed and carefully combed, his thin white mustache trimmed, a chocolate-brown sports jacket nicely contrasting with pressed gray slacks, a burgundy tie, and brown Gucci loafers—was a December day in Atlanta when he and Fonda had a lunch date. Both friends and family are distressed by their split. But Fonda, despite her own notoriety as an actor and as a political activist, had lived in the shadow of three dominant husbands. By leaving Turner, she also announced her own liberation.

Turner was despondent, and his sense of abandonment was heightened by the announcement, around the same time, that Time Warner was merging with AOL—more accurately, AOL was acquiring Time Warner. The price, based on the stock values of the companies on the day of the announcement, was pegged at a hundred and sixty-five billion dollars, the largest corporate marriage ever. Although Turner had been alerted to the merger discussions, he had not been invited by Gerald Levin to participate. "Ted was not a strategic partner," a senior executive at Time Warner who is close to Turner told me. "Gerry is a sole practitioner. He keeps things to himself. Ted was not in the loop. Yet Ted did not hesitate to endorse the deal." It was, after all, a growth strategy. Nor, according to an AOL strategist who was a party to the negotiations, was Turner's future role even a minor part of these discussions. What was talked about much more, he continued, was what a great fit CNN and AOL would be. "You can AOL-ize CNN and do cross-promotions," the executives said enthusiastically. CNN, in fact, was desperately in need of promotion, for its ratings had plunged and its promotion budget had been cut.

Turner would own four per cent (now just over three and a half per cent) of the new company and remain on the board, and he had won a vice-chairman title. But, while executives at the two companies respected Turner's many successes and his "vision," they also found him unfathomable. One senior AOL executive who was working with Turner for the first time says, "In meetings I've been in with him, he just sits there and in a piercing voice—louder than you would expect someone to talk—he interrupts or conveys a sense of 'Hurry up! Why am I here?' He gives off a feeling that he's in a rush, even if he's not doing anything."

Over the next several months, as the two companies tried to get their executives working together and achieve the synergies they had touted, Turner was in Atlanta or New York no more than four or five days a month. He was not involved in budget details, as Terry McGuirk was, and soon McGuirk, an original Turner loyalist, signalled that he "wanted out from under Ted," a senior member of the AOL Time Warner team explains. McGuirk admired Turner, but, if he was to be held responsible, then he wanted the authority, too.

There was one other difficulty. In the reorganized company, Steve Case was going to be the chairman and Levin the C.E.O., and the idea was to divide the company into separate spheres, each reporting to one of two presidents. Time Warner's Richard Parsons would oversee movies, music, publishing, legal affairs, and human resources. AOL's Robert Pittman would oversee AOL, cable, the magazines, television (including HBO, Turner Broadcasting, and the WB television network), and business development. "By a process of elimination, it made sense for Terry McGuirk to report to Bob and for Ted to take a strategic role," a senior AOL Time Warner strategist says.

Sometimes Turner made light of his diminished role. Lou Dobbs remembers being invited to Turner's Montana ranch for a weekend. While they were fishing, Dobbs, who left CNN in 1999 to start an Internet venture, Space.com—and who returned last week to, among other things, anchor "Moneyline News Hour"—said, "Ted, I outrank you. I'm C.E.O. and chairman."

"You're forgetting," Turner said. "I'm also chairman of the Turner Foundation."

"Ted, that's nonprofit!"

"What do you think Space.com is?" Turner retorted, laughing.

Dobbs laughs, too, when telling this story, but, like many of Turner's friends, he is angry. "He has not been treated with the respect due him," Dobbs says. Jane Fonda agrees. "The way it was handled was really shocking," she says. "It makes me mad. How dare they give him a phone call!" Surely Turner did not feel that he was treated properly when CNN cancelled a pet project of his—a multipart documentary exploring the proliferation of nuclear weapons. He recruited a producer, George Crile, but, soon after Crile started work, Turner told him that he was encountering budget opposition at CNN. They would have to scale the project back to three hours. By October, 2000, it was down to a single hour. "There's a lot of pressure to make the budgets," Turner explained, disappointed. In fact, he is so agitated by the budgeting strictures at CNN that, in December, he told me, "I am going to produce, myself, ten hours on nuclear proliferation and chemical and biological warfare. I'll give first crack to CNN, and if they don't want it I'll give it to PBS." (By March, CNN's founder had given up on CNN documentaries. Together with former associates like Pat Mitchell, who is the president of PBS, and Robert Wussler, who had been a top Turner Broadcasting executive, he plans to team up with Bill Moyers for a series of PBS documentaries on world issues; the Turner Foundation will provide half the financing. "Over the next few years I would hope we would do one hundred hours," Wussler says.)

When he cut the Crile project from three hours to one, Tom Johnson says, "Ted wasn't happy. I don't think he's happy with me. Ted knows I'm in a new world today." Turner was reminded of this "new world" when he invited me to sit in on a CNN executive-committee meeting on December 19th, and the invitation was rescinded. "He invited you to a meeting that is not his meeting," an AOL Time Warner executive explained.

Then, this past January, although Turner calls CNN "the most profitable news operation in the world"—it earned three hundred million dollars the previous year—its staff, of more than four thousand, was reduced by nearly ten per cent. Those who are gone include such Turner stalwarts as Elsa Klensch, Barbara Pyle, Nick Charles, Larry Woods, Gene Randall, and the Atlanta-based Turner Environment Division, with its show "People Count," which Fonda sometimes hosted. On CNN evening programs, talk replaced news reports—often the shouting-head format that CNN inaugurated with "Crossfire" and which Fox News and MSNBC had copied and extended. "Basically, the Fox prime-time schedule is just talk radio," Rick Kaplan, the former CNN/U.S. president, says.

Tom Johnson, who is worried about the future of CNN, says that Bob Pittman assured him that he and his colleagues in New York believed in CNN's mission. But Pittman's definition of CNN's mission may not match Johnson's or Turner's. Daily journalism is an inherently wasteful process: it involves waiting for calls to be returned, for airlines to fly, keeping forty-two bureaus functioning, chasing stories that don't pan out, and sometimes working for days on a single story. Will stockholders think this productive? As late as December, a longtime Turner executive predicted, "Ted will protect us."

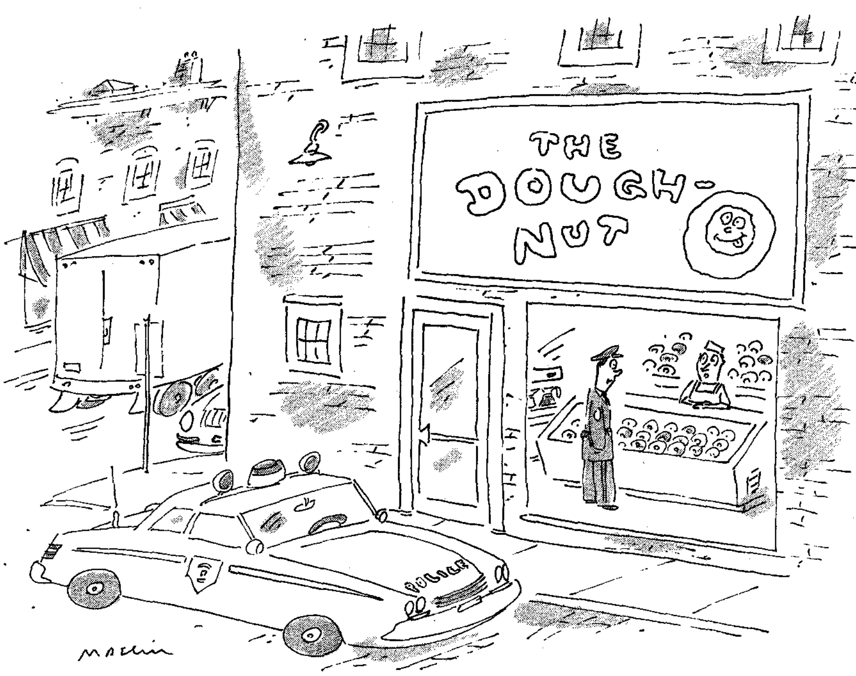
"Shall we go talk with those au pairs?"

Less than three months later, Turner was unable to protect two longtime lieutenants—Terry McGuirk and Steve Heyer. Turner says McGuirk and Heyer chafed at AOL Time Warner's demand that Turner Broadcasting's "operating profits" (EBITDA, which are earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization) grow by thirty-nine per cent in 2001—which Turner says is nearly double the actual profit-growth average of the company over the past five years. "They were unhappy mainly that the financial goals they were given were unachievable without really hurting the company," Turner says.

AOL Time Warner executives insist that the true profit-growth target for the Turner Broadcasting division is half that, and that Turner's percentage does not reflect significant accounting changes. (Nonsense, senior executives at Turner Broadcasting say, claiming that their operating profits in 2000 were just under a billion dollars and that their company-imposed goal for 2001 is nearly $1.4 billion; the growth target that AOL Time Warner presented to Wall Street for the entire company in 2001 is thirty-one per cent.) Associates say Pittman is disturbed that CNN has lost market share to Fox News and MSNBC; CNN's prime-time ratings for the first quarter of 2001 were down five per cent from last year, while Fox News's climbed by a hundred and twenty-six per cent and MSNBC's by seventeen per cent. Turner is particularly worried about Fox News, which is in fewer homes but has talk-show hosts like the conservative Bill O'Reilly, who is now reaching a larger audience than Larry King, CNN's ratings champion.

Turner says that he is uncomfortable with what he believes are arbitrary budget goals—what he called the company's new preoccupation with "short-term fluctuations" in its stock price—saying, "I never ran the company by the numbers." Pittman denies that the company is being run strictly by the numbers. "I think CNN is one of the great assets in the world," he says. "But it takes a long time to build a franchise based on reliability and trust. They got it. That's something you can't replace overnight. That's the core, the value." And, Pittman adds, "everyone agreed on" a growth-target number, including, he implies, McGuirk. McGuirk, asked about the growth target, refuses to comment. He does say, "The numbers are given to us, not negotiated."

Ted Turner today gets more notice outside his company than in it. When Fidel Castro came to New York last year for a three-day summit meeting at the U.N., he wanted to spend one night having dinner with Turner, who flew in from Montana for the occasion. The dinner stretched past midnight, and Castro was in the middle of a long-winded story when Turner raised his hand and exclaimed, "Fidel, this story is never going to end, is it? I got to go!" Castro laughed as Turner exited. Turner was the first Western businessman to have a private audience with Russia's new President, Vladimir Putin, who, Turner remembers, used to drive him when Turner visited St. Petersburg and Putin was a deputy to the city's mayor. "I learned the value of being nice to everyone," Turner says, jokingly. In a trip arranged by George Crile, last May, Turner was also among the few private citizens to visit a nuclear command center outside Moscow. General Vladimir Yakovlev, the commander of Russia's Strategic Rocket Forces, cautioned, "Don't touch any buttons!" There was a PowerPoint presentation, in English, delineating Russia's various nuclear forces. Turner learned that each of seven thousand warheads could obliterate everything within a one-to-two-mile radius before the radiation and the fires spread. Turner sat mute, Eason Jordan recalls, for an hour and a half, transfixed by what he heard and saw. "It was the only time I ever saw him speechless," Jordan says.



"You have the right to a glazed doughnut and a cup of coffee. If you can't afford a glazed doughnut and a cup of coffee, a glazed doughnut and a cup of coffee will be provided for you."

Yakovlev and Putin, like Castro, watch CNN. "The Carter Center has programs in sixty-five different nations," Jimmy Carter says. "We deal with leaders of nations who have a human-rights problem or conflict. . . . We go to those countries, and they quite often do not have a U.S. embassy in them. Invariably, in the offices there will be a TV station tuned to CNN." They know about Turner, and they know, Carter adds, that Turner is a true citizen of the world, a man who speaks up for what he believes even when it offends his government. Carter describes Turner as a personal "hero." Kofi Annan sees this in Turner's appeal. "He and Castro have a similar quality," Annan says. "They are folk heroes of a sort. You can have one hundred heads of state here, and most people will gravitate toward Castro. You can have one hundred media heads here, and people will gravitate toward Ted."

In mid-March, Turner made a two-day visit to Harvard. An evening appearance at the Kennedy School of Government drew a large audience, and he was introduced by Alex S. Jones, the director of the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, who said, "Ted Turner changed America." Turner jumped up on the low platform, pumped Jones's hand, and started talking, with Jones still at his side. Turner used no notes. He wore a blue corduroy jacket and gray slacks. Perhaps it was the way he jumped up and, in his joltingly loud voice, started talking quickly, or the way he suddenly paused and drawled, "Ahhhhhhhhhh"; or perhaps it was the way he seemed to lapse into self-pity when he said, "I'm just trying to do the best I can," or the way he raced from subject to subject, sometimes letting thoughts collide—how he was rejected by Harvard when he applied, and how he'd given Jane Fonda a hundred million dollars, and how, just recently, she bestowed more than twelve million of that sum on Harvard's School of Education for the study of gender and education, and how he wasn't a journalist but had related to the species since he sold newspapers as a boy—perhaps it was these quirks that caused the audience, as often happens when Turner speaks, to giggle. Michael Baumgartner, a first-year graduate student, initially thought Turner sounded drunk. Watching Turner speak is like watching live TV, with the audience wondering what will happen next.

But although at first people seemed to be laughing at Turner, the feeling in the room soon changed. On being told that President Bush earlier that day had abandoned a campaign pledge to establish "mandatory reduction targets" for carbon-dioxide emissions by power plants, Turner was momentarily silenced. "That's heartbreaking news," he said finally. "I mean, I can't take any more bad news. I've lost my job and my wife this year!" Turner went on to talk about the environment, and about curbing nuclear weapons, and about his commitment to news. When he finished, students clamored to shake his hand.

That night, Turner was discreet about

CNN. Asked about its future, he said, "Well, I hope it's a bright one." But, while Turner thinks CNN has programmed "too much" talk, he has no idea how to cure its ratings woes: "Quite frankly, I'm not sure I have the answers." Privately, he is concerned about a general dumbing down that is taking place in the media, putting "DiSiprio"—he means Leonardo DiCaprio—"on the cover of *Time*. Obviously, it should be on the cover of *People* or *Entertainment Weekly!*"

By the next morning, the man who confesses to a congenital inability to police a secret was no longer restrained. Turner did not criticize the recent round of cutbacks at CNN, but he did criticize the parent company's growth target. This was impossible to achieve, Turner said, without doing harm to CNN's journalism. "I always wanted CNN to be the New York *Times* of the television business," he said, a little sadly.

OLD MR. FORRESTER

Old Mr. Forrester—light, light as a leaf,
Brown, desiccated, and attached by just
The thinnest stem to motion and the sun.
He sat all day in the precious, vanishing warmth
And watched his feet in black and shining shoes,
And watched his dry, blotched, unaspiring hands,
And now and then the far heights of the mountains.
And meditated, perhaps, upon his body:
That most familiar and disobedient thing,
Which in time segments was his abject slave,
Dressed as he willed, raised, lowered, hot or cold,
But in the sweep, the arc disclosing itself,
Altering with silent mutiny each particle
The will asserted was his own: the hair,
Changing without request its original color,
The muscles, unauthorized, loosening their grip,
The teeth deserting, the eyes treacherous, and
The lazy blood
Slack in its flowing and unpunishable.
And meditated, perhaps, upon his soul—
Which meant heaven knew what—the inner thing
With which he had incuriously lived
Until the prospect of its company
On a trip into territory where this would be
Presumably the Friend to Have, the *Visé,*
The Contact, made him desire to cultivate
An alien whose speech he did not know
And the long residence of whose proximity
Might make him now a sullen and suspicious
Prospect for this belated amity.

—*Josephine Jacobsen*

Although the AOL Time Warner merger took effect only in January, there have already been some successes. As the largest individual shareholder in the conglomerate, Turner is enthusiastic about a new emphasis on coördination and synergy. Of Gerald Levin's management over the past five years, Turner bluntly says, "The Time Warner divisions did not coöperate the way they should have. . . . I think he did a pretty marginal job of running the company." Now, with roughly forty per cent of Americans using AOL to reach the Internet, AOL is vital in promoting each division of the company. In the eight months ending January 31st, for example, Pittman told Wall Street analysts, AOL had sold eight hundred thousand new subscriptions to Time Inc.'s different magazines. The company is in various businesses, Levin said at a conference earlier this month, but one word united them: "subscriptions"—a total of a hundred and thirty million subscribers.

Turner, however, is afraid that when journalistic divisions like CNN shrink corporate executives may try to "avoid doing stories that are critical of the big companies, like the oil companies and the automobile companies. It's not easy to do stories that are critical of G.E.—you know, nuclear-power-plant stories. When was the last time you saw stories on TV critical of G.E. or DuPont? Better to stay away from the corporations—they're the sponsors. That's the danger." Turner, to be sure, does not talk about the embarrassments of his own tenure, including CNN's unceasing coverage of the O. J. Simpson murder case and trial.

At another of his Harvard appearances—a session in which he was questioned by Jones and several others for an hour and then stayed for an hour more as the six finalists for the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting discussed their stories—Turner said, "I've already been fired, and I probably will be again shortly." One of the Shorenstein Fellows rose and condescendingly suggested that Turner might follow the example of Henry Ford, who also left his job but who set up the Ford Foundation, which is "one of the most influential forces for the framing of issues in the country. You have a life and a future and can use your contacts—"

"I am," Turner interrupted, and he mentioned his gift to the U.N. Foundation. "No other individual in the world is giving as much to the poor world as I am. I'm spending fifty million dollars in the United States, mostly on environmental and family-planning causes. Ahhhhhhhh . . . I mean, family planning is under attack. You know, pro-lifers have got control of the White House. Roe v. Wade is hanging on by a thread. A woman's right to choose? They want to take that away. We're fighting global warming." He mentioned the Nuclear Threat Initiative and the dues payment to the U.N. "And let me tell you what else I'm doing. I'm very close to making an announcement of a personal partnership through our foundation with public broadcasting to fund important documentaries that Turner Broadcasting has dropped. . . . And I've been trying desperately to get my network. It won't be NBC, but it will start with an N—NTV. The good news? I'm gonna get my network. The bad news? It's in Russia! I'm gonna try and help freedom of the press. I mean, I am doing plenty, Bubba!"

It's not entirely clear whether Turner will own a network in Russia. In early April, he announced a plan to purchase part of the network founded by the Russian press baron Vladimir A. Gusinsky. This pleased independent Russian journalists like Masha Lipman, the deputy editor of the magazine *Itogi*, who says, "It will be much more difficult for the Russian authorities to play dirty jokes" on Turner. But the hard questions, she says, are two: Who will control the journalistic enterprise—Turner or the Russian authorities? And will Turner receive real guarantees of editorial freedom? Turner's longtime colleague Bob Wussler says that Gazprom, the state-dominated monopoly that has asserted control over the TV network, told him and Turner, "You go do a deal with Gusinsky and come back and we'll do a deal with you." And even though President Putin stopped short of offering what Wussler calls "a ringing endorsement" of press freedom when Turner asked for it, Wussler feels that "Putin is a politician and can say just so much. We took it as a good sign." Last week, however, Turner was struggling to invent a formula to satisfy Gusinsky, Gazprom, and the journalists themselves. On the surface, the deal is consistent with Turner's world-diplomacy principle—"Just about everybody will be friendly toward us if we are friendly with them." But it may also suggest a certain naïveté.

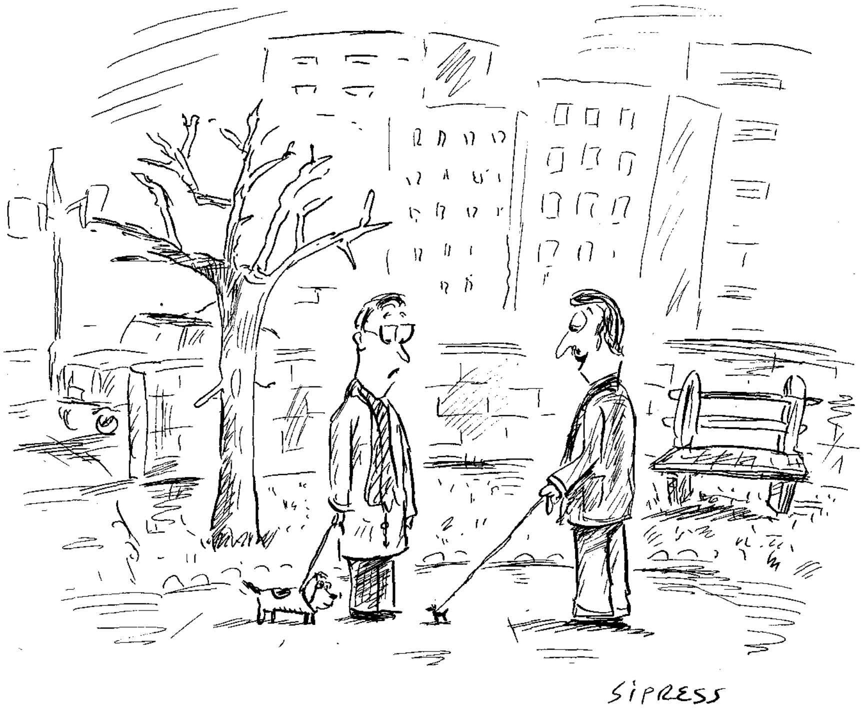
Turner's ability to give his money away has diminished as his principal stock holding—AOL Time Warner—has declined by more than thirty per cent since the merger announcment, reducing his net worth by about two billion dollars. It is possible, he tells me, that he will end his association with the company entirely. He hasn't quite accepted the idea that his business career is largely over, but he believes that his primary mission now is to help save the world, and perhaps himself.

"For some reason, he has a guilty conscience," Jane Fonda told me. "He went much further than his father thought he would. So what's left? To be a good guy. He knows he will go down in history. He won't go down as a greedy corporate mogul. Although he claims to be an atheist, at the end of every speech he says, 'God bless you.' He wants to get into Heaven." Fonda told me of a family outing in 1992 on the occasion of the five-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America. They went to a matinée of a film about Columbus and in the darkened theatre someone screamed out a litany of Columbus's supposed sins. There was a silence, until Turner blurted, "I never did that!" Fonda reached over and soothed her husband by patting his knee and said, "It's O.K., honey. I know you didn't." She now says, "I did that a lot." Turner concedes, "I wish I didn't apologize as much as I do."

Over breakfast at the Charles Hotel, in Cambridge, I asked Turner why he felt so burdened. "It's the position you're in," he said. "Because I was at CNN, because I had commitments, because I did the Goodwill Games, because I was concerned, because I did all those documentaries, I developed a self-imposed sense of responsibility. If Gandhi and Martin Luther King could make the kind of sacrifices with their lives that they did, and that our parents did fighting in World War I and World War II, why couldn't I make sacrifices, too?" At that, Turner looked up from his hearty chipped-beef-and-biscuit breakfast, in the middle of the hotel dining room, and, as people at nearby tables leaned forward to listen, he performed from memory parts of Thomas Macaulay's "Horatius":

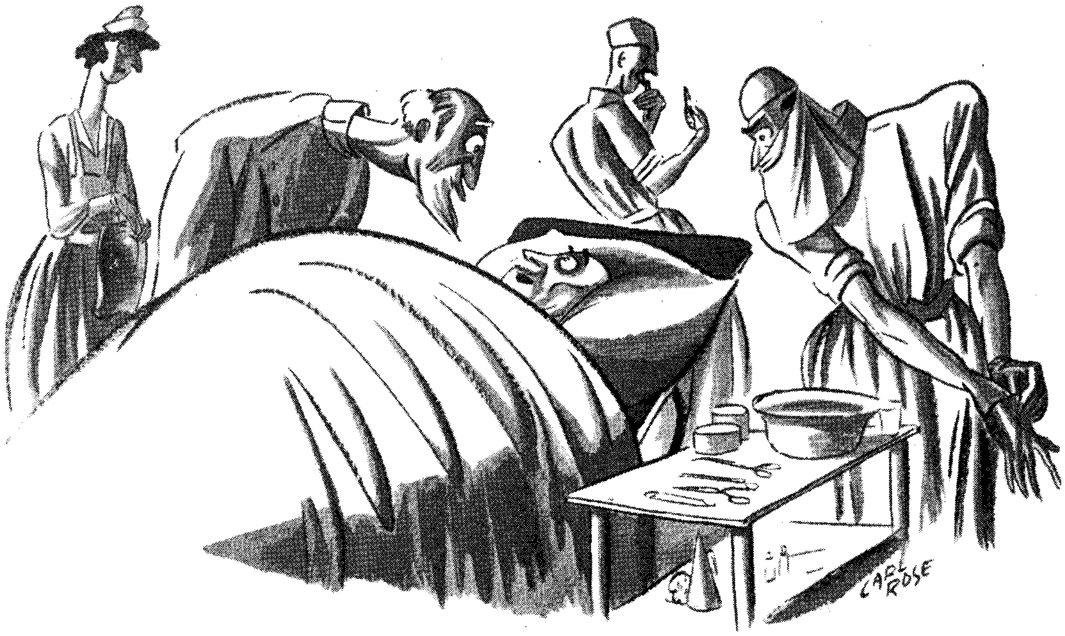
> And how can man die better
> Than facing fearful odds,
> For the ashes of his fathers,
> And the temples of his gods. . . .
>
> Haul down the bridge, Sir Consul
> With all the speed ye may;
> I, with two more to help me,
> Will hold the foe in play.
> In yon straight path a thousand
> May well be stopped by three.
> Now who will stand on either hand,
> And keep the bridge with me?

"Pretty cool, huh," Turner said, grinning; he had, in the longer version that he recited, got almost every word right. "If Horatius could do it, I can do it. He saved Rome. . . . He stopped the Etruscans." His smile widened, and he couldn't resist a final bow, with a loud "heh-heh-heh." Then he leaned over and whispered, as if to a co-conspirator, "I know *a lot.* My knowledge is my burden. If I didn't know so much, I could just go through life as a dilettante." He stood up and, watched by everyone in the room, walked briskly to the door. ♦

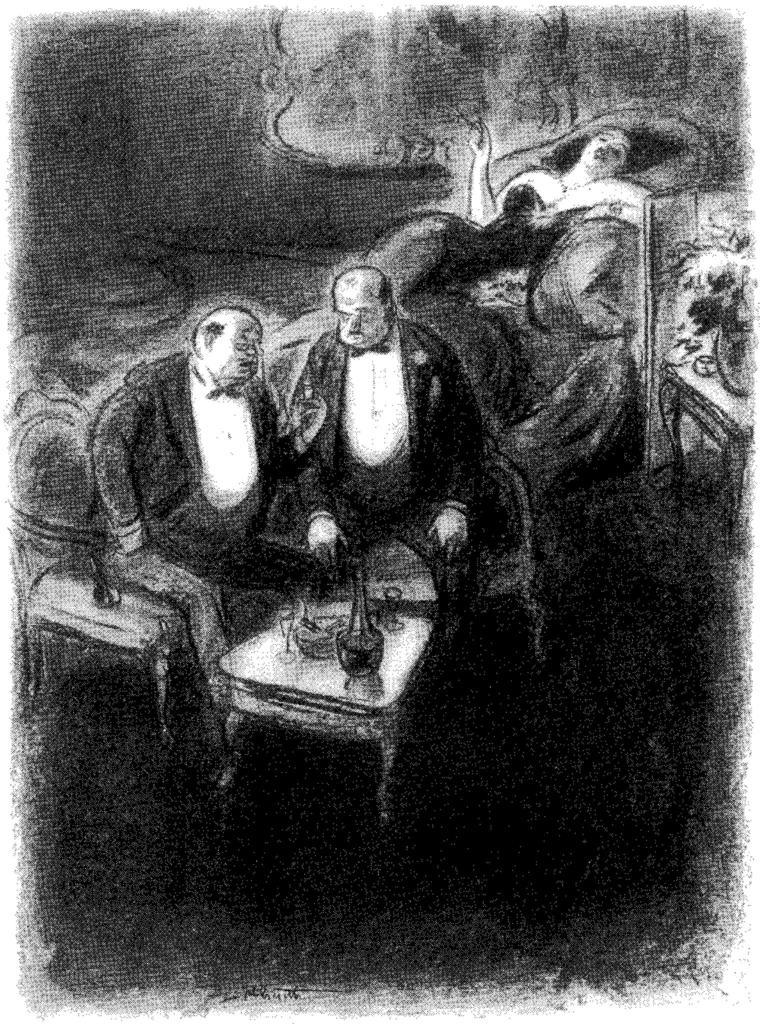


"They were bred originally to be hors d'œuvres."

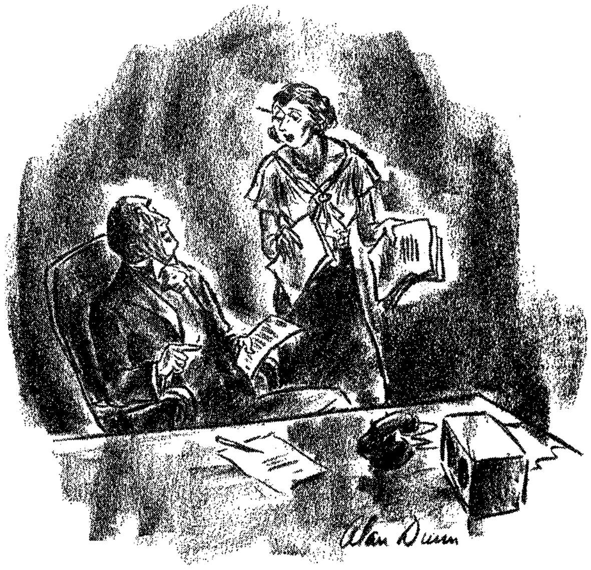
FROM THE ARCHIVES



"Say, Doc, do me a favor. Just keep your eye on Consolidated Can Common, and if she goes bearish tell my broker to sell and get four thousand shares of P. & Q. Rails Preferred on the usual margin. Thanks." (1927)



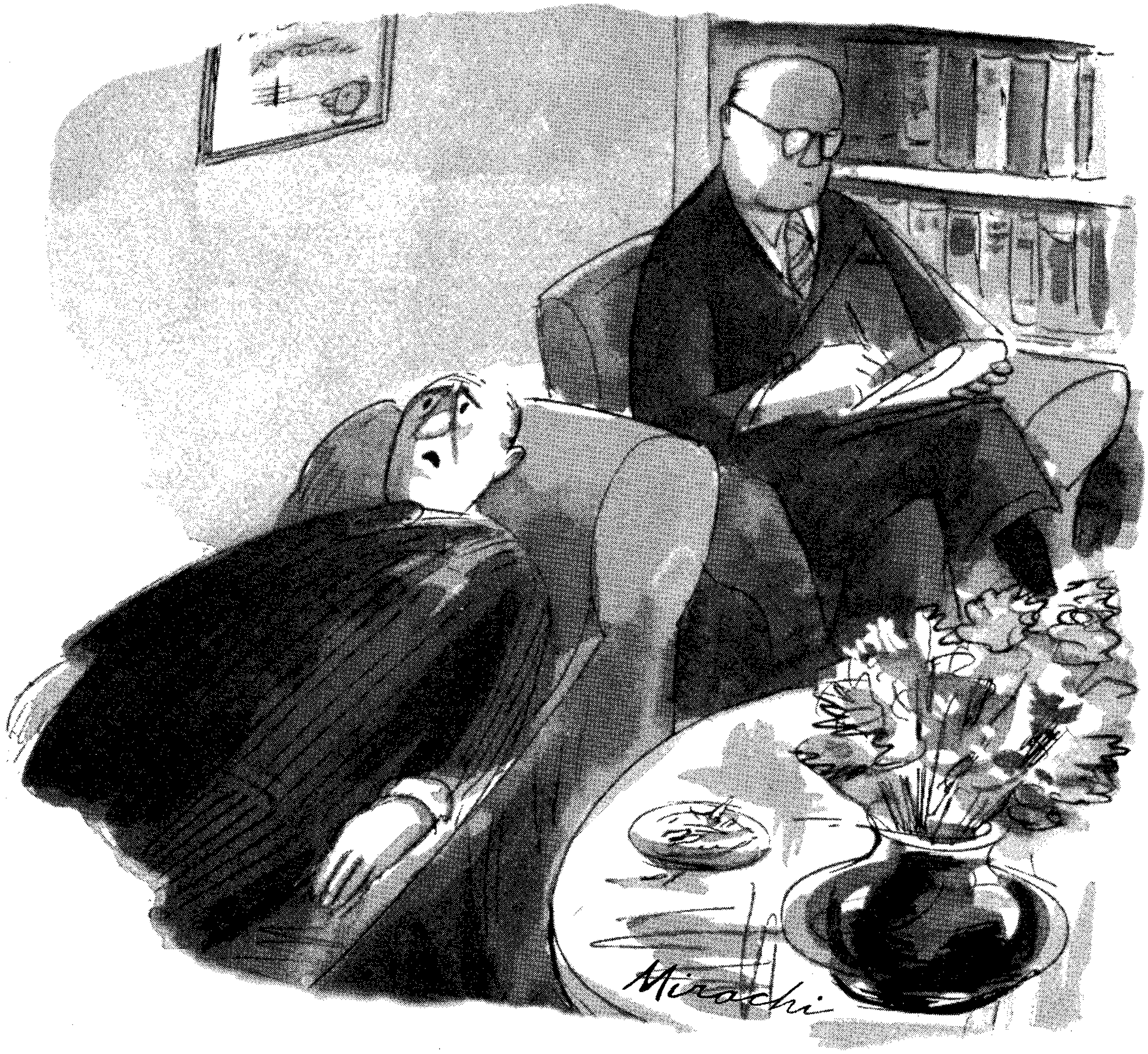
"I never told her about the depression. She would have worried." (1934)



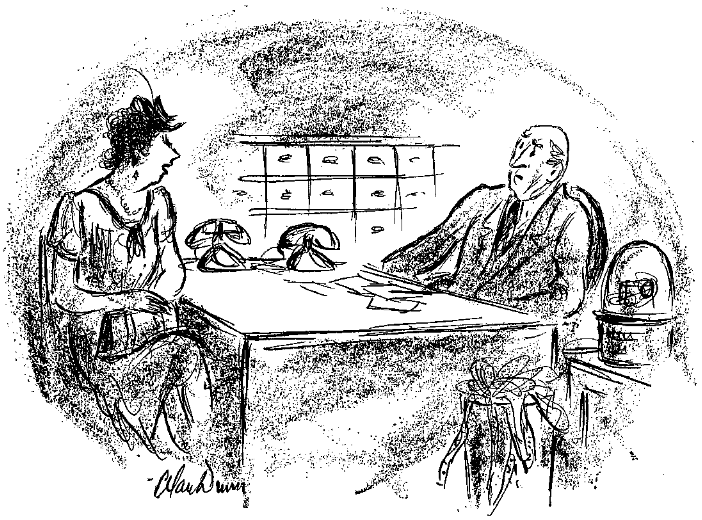
"We say 'recession' here—not 'depression,' Miss Apgar." (1937)

The New Yorker was only four years old—barely out of toddlerhood—when the crash of '29 announced the arrival of the Great Depression. Bad times are good times for cartoonists; absent misfortune, after all, what's there to laugh about? And so the plunging stockbroker joined the desert-island castaway and the end-is-nigh sandwich-board man in the repertory company of standard tropes. During the unavoidable interludes of prosperity, cartoonists have had to make do with the hope that disaster is just around the corner. Might we now be entering a new Golden Age?

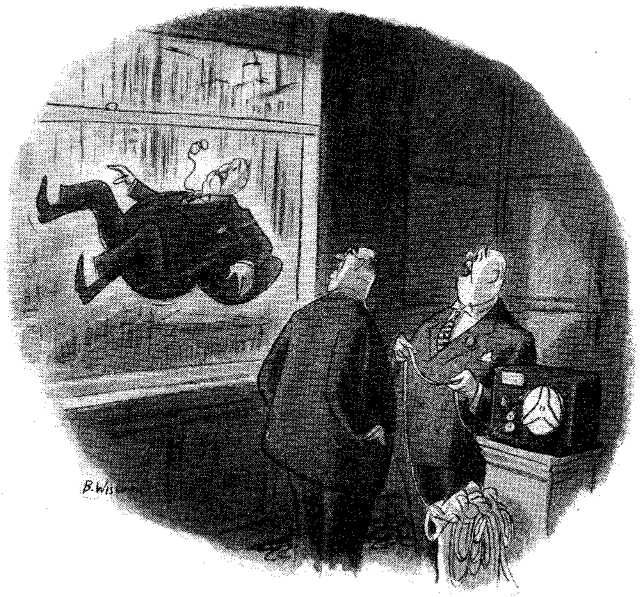
ROSE, 9/10/27; DUNN, 12/4/37; GALBRAITH, 10/13/34



"I could have bought General Motors in 1949 for twenty-six dollars a share. I could have bought Boeing for six dollars a share. I could have bought Electric Boat for thirteen dollars a share. I could have . . ." (1954)

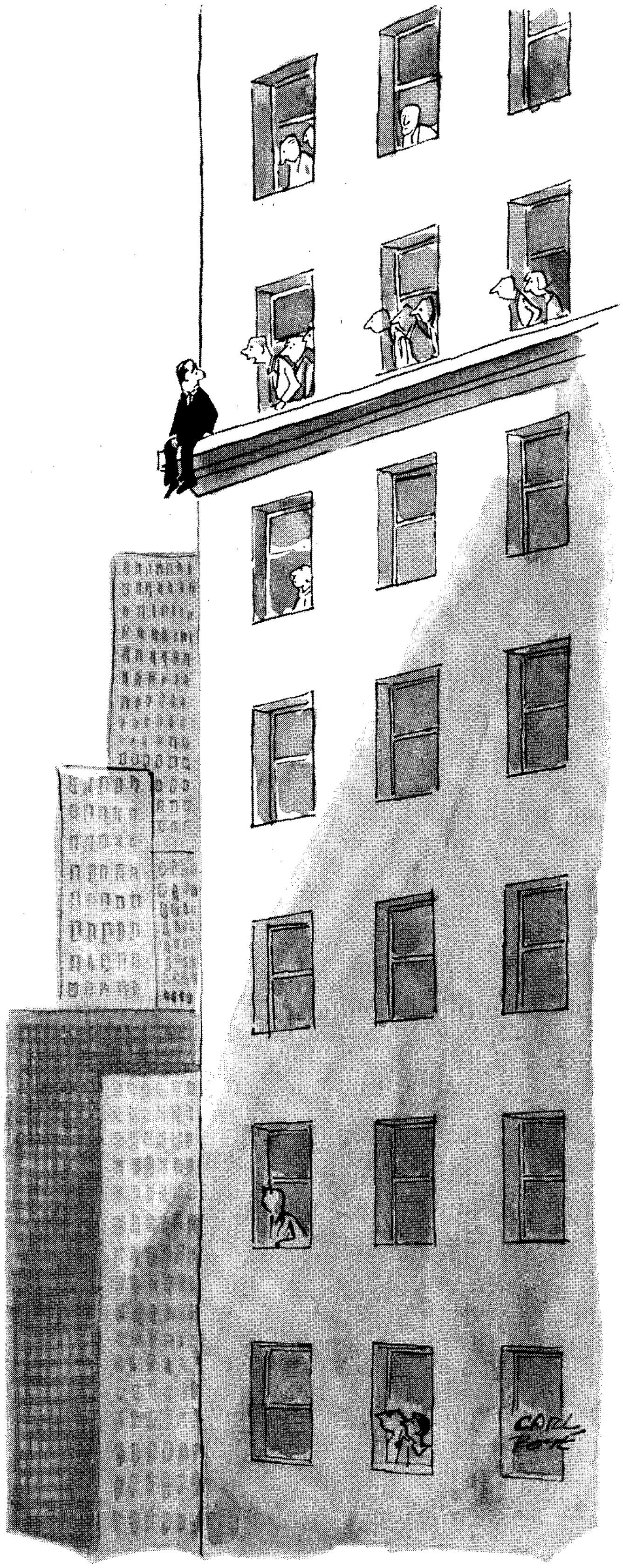


"And now, just before the next depression I want you to take all my money out of stocks and buy bonds." (1946)

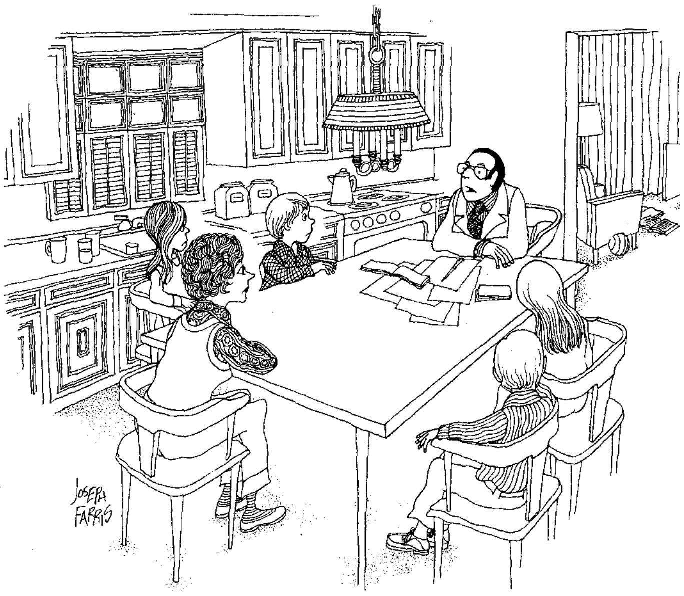


"Why, that's Prescott! Suppose he knows something we don't know?" (1956)

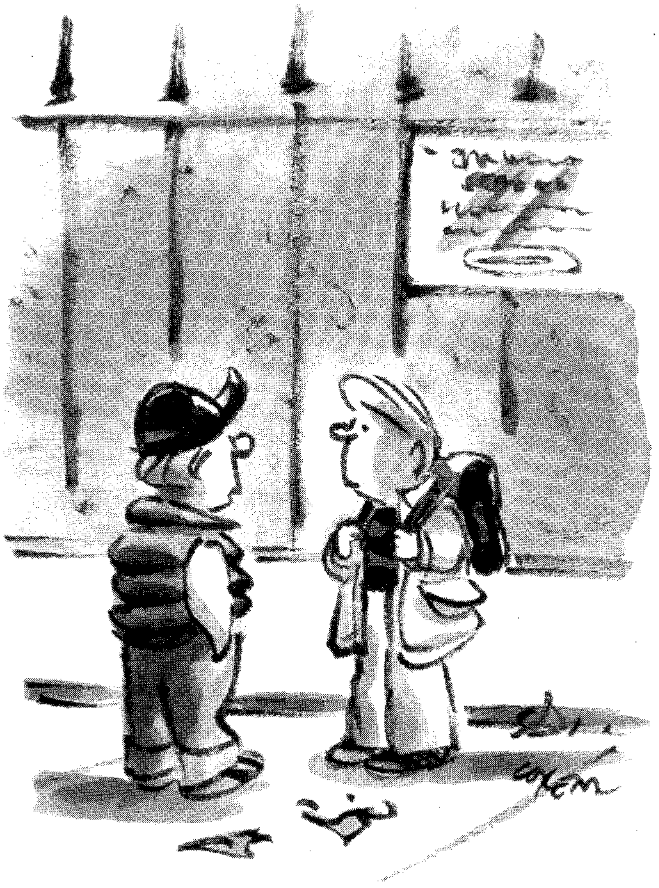
MIRACHI, 12/4/54; WISEMAN, 2/18/56; DUNN, 7/27/46



"But, sir, many analysts consider this only a long-overdue correctional movement, following which the market will resume its upward course, with a rally expected to penetrate previous Dow-Jones highs by the year's end." (1966)

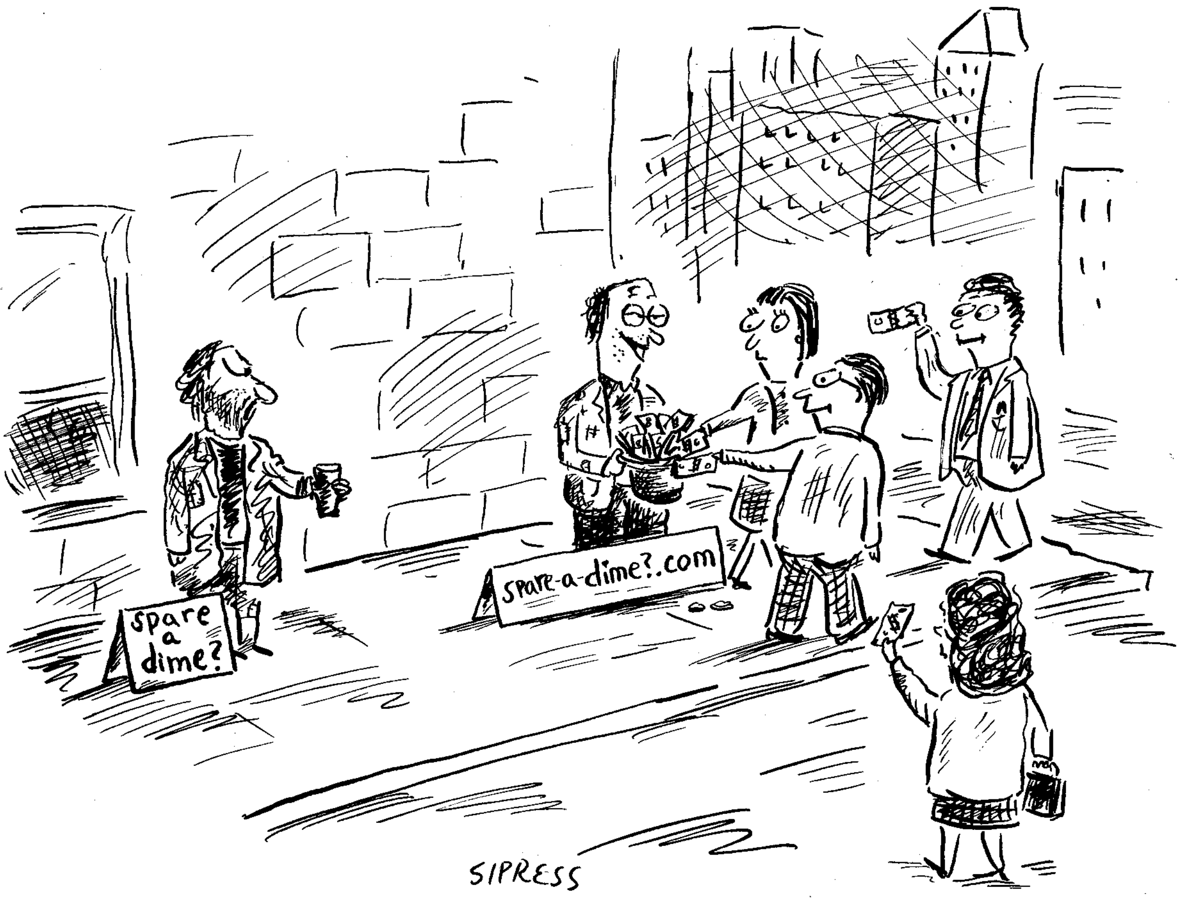


"I've called the family together to announce that, because of inflation, I'm going to have to let two of you go." (1974)

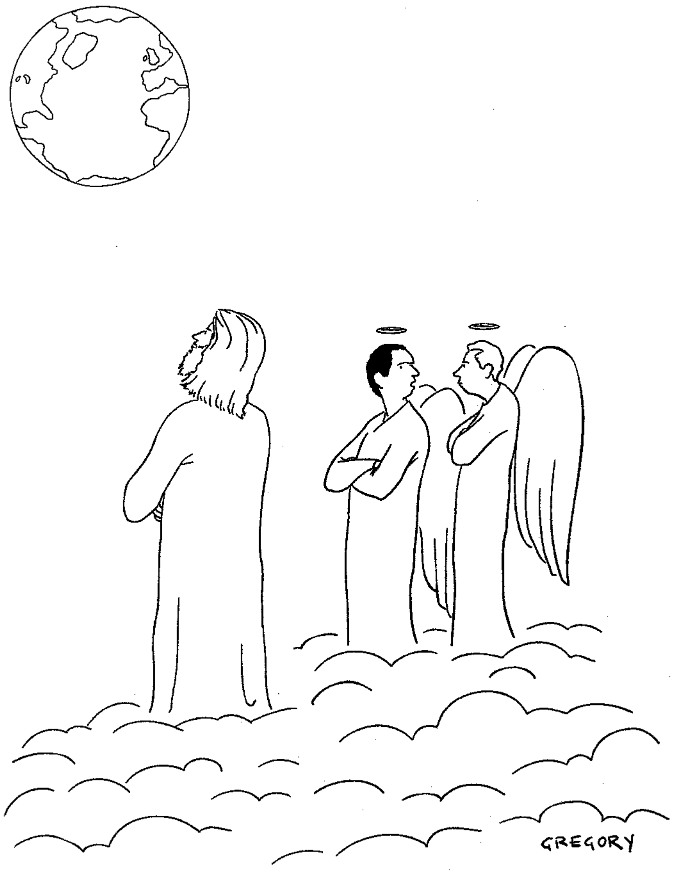


"I came out O.K. Everything I had was in baseball cards." (1987)

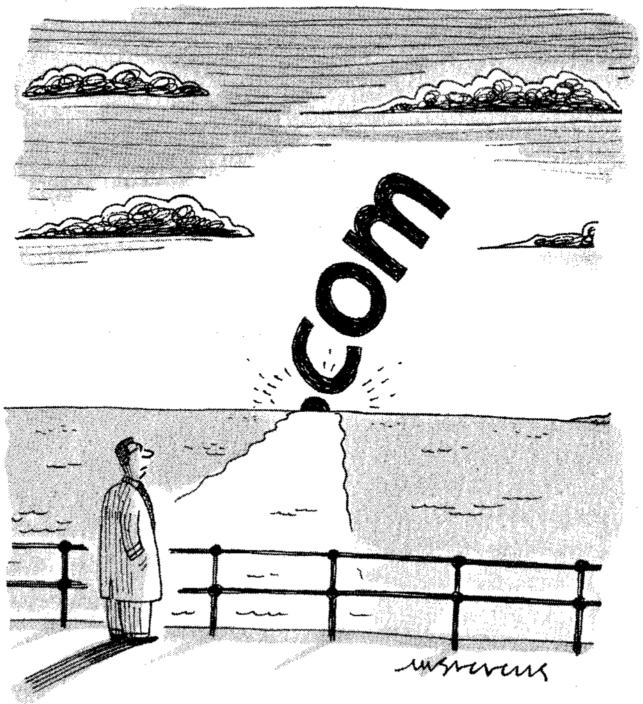
FARRIS, 12/2/74; LORENZ, 11/16/87; ROSE, 5/7/66


spare a dime?
spare-a-dime?.com
SIPRESS

(1999)



"It has yet to turn a profit." (2000)


.com
mstevens

(2001)

SIPRESS, 8/16/99; STEVENS, 1/8/01; GREGORY, 3/27/00

A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE GOLDEN PYRAMID

Building a fortune on faith, phone bills, and the patience of your friends.

BY DAVID SAMUELS

"You want to be somebody so bad you can taste it, right?" says Greg Provenzano, staring out into the darkened vastness of the Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio. Provenzano is the president of ACN, the fastest-growing network-marketing company in America. Raising his hands above the crowd, he presses down lightly, once, with open palms, as if in benediction.

"Is quitting an option for you?" he asks.

"No!" the crowd roars.

"Are your dreams big enough?"

"Yes!"

"All you need is something to believe in," he says. "You have found that vehicle. You have found the vehicle called ACN."

Five thousand salesmen rise to their feet, applauding, stomping, chanting, cheering, and honking air horns. Cameras swoop in from the wings to beam back scenes of frenzied celebration to a forty-foot-high video screen above the stage, completing a high-energy feedback loop that threatens any moment now to blow the roof off the arena.

In the twenty-third row of white plastic folding chairs, a new recruit named Ed Kustanovich sits with a yellow legal pad on his lap and a ballpoint pen in his hand. He is a salesman by nature and a structural engineer by training, an energetic man in his late forties with owlish round glasses and wiry salt-and-pepper hair that stands up on his head like the bristles on a brush. During a break in the applause, he tells me that he joined the ACN network less than three months ago, at the invitation of his wife's second cousin. A moment later, he decides to tell me the rest of his life story. He speaks in heavily accented but complete sentences, which he accompanies with the vigorous circular gestures he might use to wash the windshield of his car.

"I come twenty years ago from Russia," he says. "I work hard from the very first day." He arrived in Providence, Rhode Island, where, he says, he got a job as a structural draftsman during the day and worked in a bakery on weekend nights until his English was good enough for him to gain his engineering license. Then he began working his way up to become a supervising engineer on large-scale construction projects, first in Providence and now in Los Angeles.

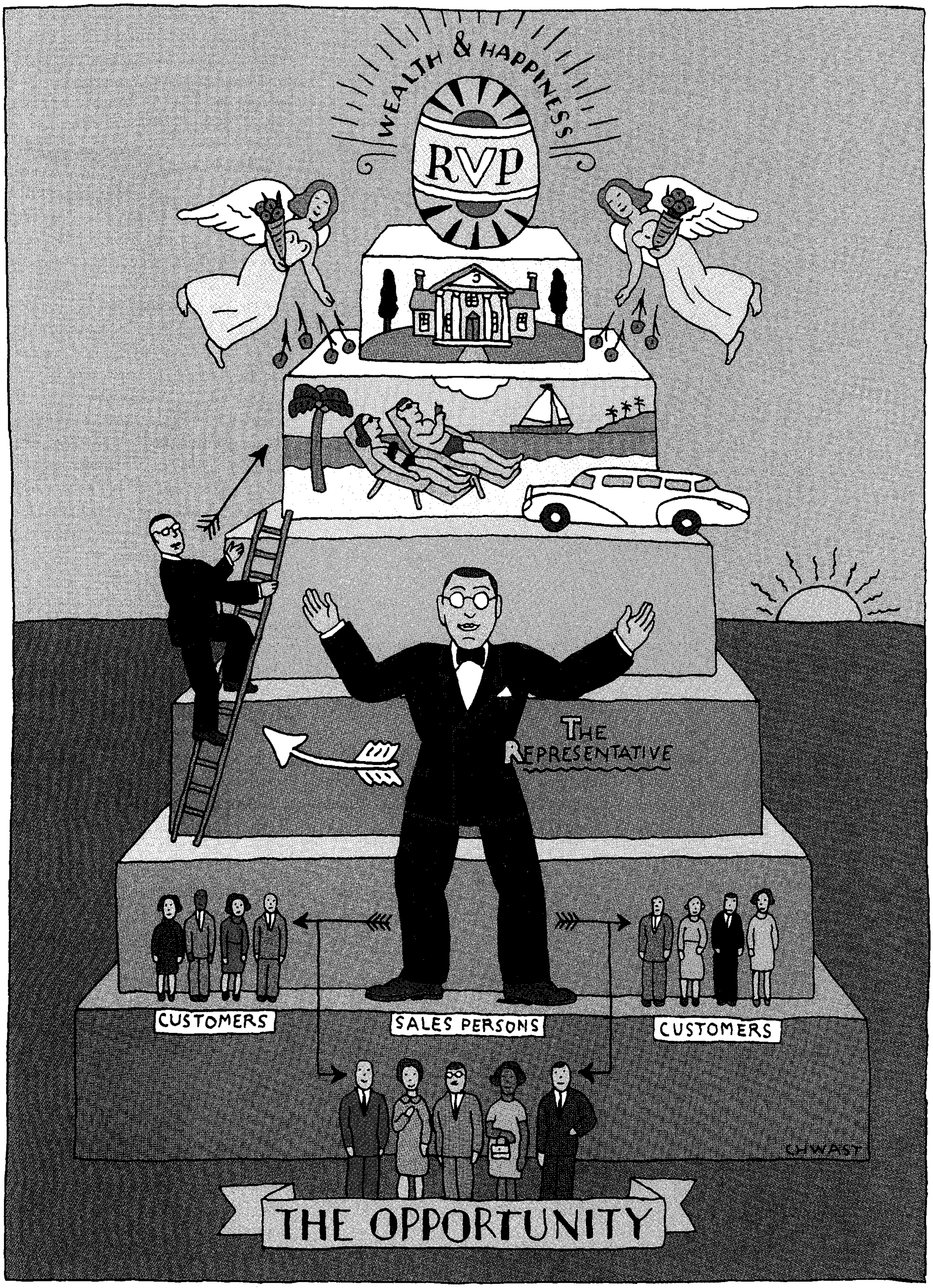
The chairs immediately to Ed's left are occupied by the members of his "upline," the chain of family members, friends, and friends of friends who introduced him to the company. ACN buys blocks of bandwidth and energy from wholesale suppliers, and then sells phone and electrical services to its customers, at prices that may exceed those offered by more established providers. A significant proportion of the company's revenue, though, comes from the fee of four hundred and ninety-nine dollars that prospective salesmen must pay to join. Each new salesman who, within thirty days, persuades eight people to sign over their long-distance or utilities accounts to ACN earns a bonus for whoever recruited him. In addition, for every new salesman that Ed recruits, he and the members of his upline will receive a bonus of between sixty and ninety dollars apiece. Prospective customers who refuse to sign over their accounts, or who ask too many questions, are known within the company as "rotten apples." The salesmen are encouraged to spend their time identifying crisp red apples and keeping their "personal belief systems" strong.

The salesmen in the Convention Center this morning have plenty of reasons to believe in ACN. The company began with twenty sales representatives in 1992; it has now recruited more than four hundred thousand representatives worldwide. As a result of the recent, far-reaching efforts to deregulate the old-fashioned public power monopolies in California, ACN has also become one of the state's largest alternative providers of energy. California's experiment with open energy markets has contributed in recent months to disruptions of the power supply in Silicon Valley, the interruption of traffic signals on busy streets in San Francisco, and rolling blackouts from Sacramento to Los Angeles. This January, Governor Gray Davis declared the state's effort at deregulation "a colossal and dangerous failure." For ACN, California's experiment with deregulation has led to the fastest increase in the size of any regional network since the company was born.

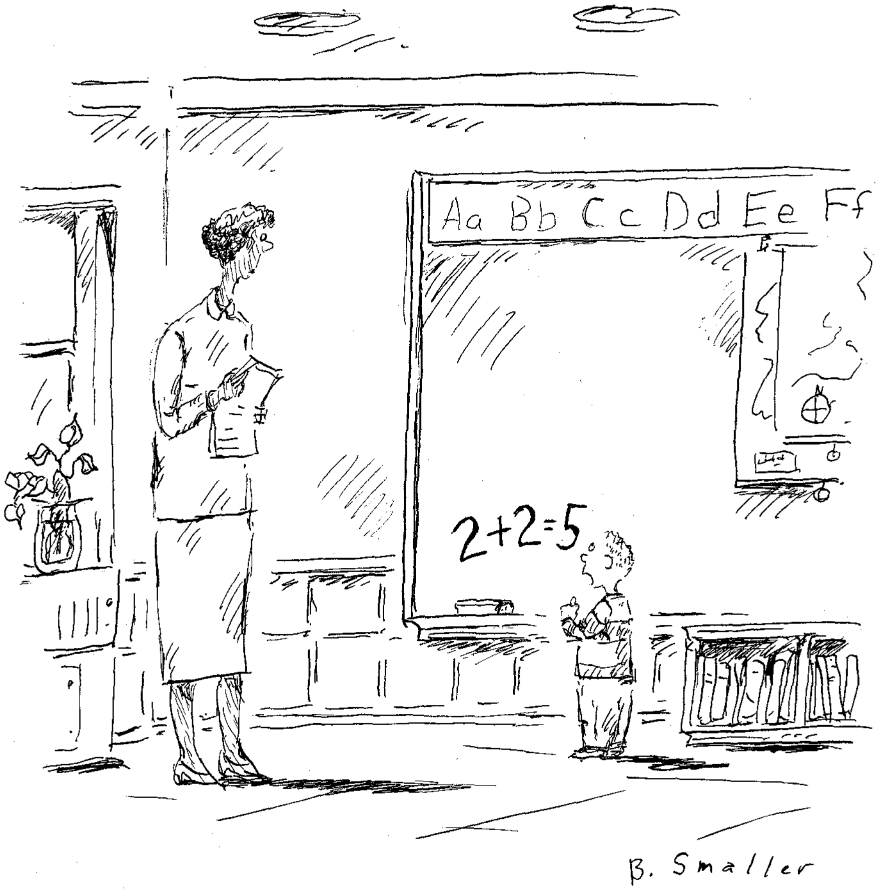
Seated immediately to Ed's left is David Halpern, who recruited him to ACN. Halpern is a friendly, bearded man who is Ed's wife's second cousin and the president of Crescent Jewelers, the largest retail jewelry chain on the West Coast. Next to him is Chris Bodig, a big man with soft brown eyes who works as a producer for a well-known sports channel. He was recruited by Joe Fortunato, his roommate at Yale, who used to write for "Living in Captivity," a short-lived sitcom on Fox. Brian Sax, a crew-cut former engineer and captain of the Princeton track team, is the leader of Ed's upline. By working hard and following the ACN program, the salesmen are told, they can rise to the level of regional vice-president, or R.V.P., in two to three years, travel to exotic vacation spots, receive a stress-free residual income that may place them in the top one half of one per cent of money-earners in the world, and enjoy many other wondrous benefits bestowed by what the speakers refer to, in shorthand, as "the Opportunity."

The convention speakers are vivid examples of how the capacity for belief can transform the lives of ordinary men and women; audience members are encouraged to identify with their rags-to-riches stories, in the same way that comic-book readers might identify with one of the Fantastic Four. Each speaker

SEYMOUR CHWAST


WEALTH & HAPPINESS
RVP
THE REPRESENTATIVE
CUSTOMERS
SALES PERSONS
CUSTOMERS
CHWAST
THE OPPORTUNITY

By eliminating the bother of tangible products, the founders of ACN have reduced the network-marketing business to its essence: the hopeful, levitating faith of its members. "I will be set free!" sales reps chant at an international convention.


Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff
2+2=5
B. Smaller

"Maybe it's not a wrong answer—maybe it's just a different answer."

• •

arrives onstage to a bouncy pop song chosen specially for him and an enthusiastic introduction that highlights his outstanding personal qualities, a ritual known inside ACN as "edification."

Montrel Jackson is a member of the Hall of Fame and the Circle of Champions. A trim black man in his mid-thirties, with a shaved head and a ready smile, he bounds onstage with the intensity and self-awareness of an old-time rhythm-and-blues performer. He grew up in Oakdale, Louisiana, where, he says, the people were poor because of their inherited attitudes toward money. " 'You know what? I don't want to be rich,' " he says, mimicking a sentiment he heard growing up. " 'I don't want to be rich,' " he repeats. " 'I just want to be *comfortable*.' " Suddenly, he grows serious. "Is it all right for your grandmother to walk while the minister rides by in his Cadillac?" Jackson thunders.

"No!" the audience roars back.

Next is Regional Vice-President Debbie Davis, who looks like a down-home version of Christine Todd Whitman in a pale-pink business suit. She floats onstage to the tune of "Tupelo Honey."

"How many of you want to be set free?" she asks. One by one, the women in the crowd rise to their feet as Davis leads them in a chorus: "I will be set free! I will be an R.V.P.!" The speakers continue their parade to the podium while Ed Kustanovich writes down sayings and statistics, and draws charts to illustrate the flow of money within the network, his engineer's mind overtaken by the frothy tide of optimism pouring from the stage. As the day continues, Ed's eyes grow brighter, and the diagrams are swamped in a sea of blue ink. Those who have faith in the Opportunity, the speakers say, will succeed. Those who lack faith in the Opportunity will fail.

Network marketing in America, as we know it, began with Amway, a company founded in 1959 by two lifelong friends from Michigan, Jay Van Andel and Rich DeVos. Beginning with one product, the Amway L.O.C. Multi-purpose Cleaner, Van Andel and DeVos took to the road in a touring bus, promoting an ever-expanding variety of Amway powders, soaps, and lotions. By the end of the sixties, the company had recruited more than a hundred thousand distributors, each of whom had paid for the privilege of selling the company's products. As profits from the network-marketing plan grew, the company's main production facility, in Ada, Michigan, was transformed into a mile-long city with a recycling facility, shuttle-bus service, a railroad station, and a private fleet of planes. In the mid-seventies, the Federal Trade Commission prepared a case arguing that the company was actually a sophisticated pyramid scheme. When the case against Amway was dismissed, dozens of network-marketing companies sprang into existence, peddling things like water filters and calling cards through far-flung networks of representatives.

The five men who founded ACN came together in the fall of 1992, after working for other network-marketing companies that eventually disbanded or went broke. All of them are from Michigan, and none have college degrees or any previous professional expertise in telecommunications or utilities. But these men know from experience why people join companies like ACN. "They are dissatisfied with something in their lives," one of the founders, Tony Cupisz, explains backstage in Columbus. "They're dissatisfied with work, or with the glass ceiling, or by the feeling that they should have something better."

As he talks about ACN, its great advantage becomes clear: the company has no physical connection to the services it provides. By eliminating the bother of a tangible, physical product, like water filters, hand lotion, vitamins, or soap, the five former sales representatives from Michigan have reduced the network-marketing business down to its essence—the hopeful, levitating faith of its members. They have summoned an empire out of air.

When the speeches are over, thousands of ACN representatives spill out of the hall, talking and laughing and slapping each other on the shoulder and exchanging business cards, on their way upstairs to the cocktail lounge of the Hyatt Hotel. It is time to build company spirit and trade stories with the thousands of other representatives who have come to Columbus from hundreds of towns and cities around the country. Standing by the bar in the Hyatt is James Maclin, an imposing black man whose enormous upper arms stretch the fabric of his electric-blue suit, and whose eyes radiate manic energy from behind a pair of huge glasses with the Gucci "G" emblazoned on the frames. He used to work in a steel mill in Cleveland; now he repairs electrical systems on private jets.

He has a story to tell me about his work, he says. One day, he walked into the cabin of a jet to do a repair and saw that the entire interior of the plane was white. The carpets were white. The walls were white. All the furniture, including the television set, was white. He sat inside that jet for half an hour, he says. The whiteness of the jet blew his mind.

"I want you to document this," he says. "I thought, I have to find a way to get me one of these jets." Two months later, he says, a friend, who was once a lineman for the Cleveland Browns, invited him to join ACN. When he strikes it rich, he says, the first thing he plans to buy is a white jet.

A little later in the evening, Ed Kustanovich and the members of his upline gather in Room 839 of the Hyatt, sitting on the floor and on the bed and leaning up against the walls, to celebrate Brian Sax's elevation to the position of regional vice-president. What he'd like now, Brian says, is for all the people here to share a few words about why they joined ACN.

"I live in the freest country in the world," one older salesman says. "But I don't have access to that freedom because I don't have money."

As the new members continue to speak, it appears that lack of sleep and the high emotional pitch of the proceedings have softened the barriers that often keep people from confessing their secrets to a roomful of strangers.

"The last person who invested with me lost his money," a middle-aged businessman with five kids offers. "The last person who worked for me lost his job."

"You get knocked around."

"Mediocrity becomes the way you survive."

With his back against the wall, Ed Kustanovich stares intently around the room. He appears fascinated and a little embarrassed, running his fingers through his wire-brush hair. Next to him is his first recruit, a long-haired commercial artist named John Gomez, who was a tenant in a house that Ed rented out. When his turn arrives, Ed steps toward the center of the room and tells the story of how he came to America twenty years ago without a penny to his name.

"God bless America!" Ed exclaims. "I work very hard. Made sacrifices for career. Twenty years later, working as hard as I can. Seems to me it is vicious circle. I make good income. I have good life. But you have to pay for it, all the time.

"I want team, nice people, friendship," he adds, stepping back toward the relative safety of the wall. His face is flushed, and there are traces of sweat on his forehead. He is happy that the moment is over. He is happy to let go of loneliness, anxiety, and striving, and to relax into the warm embrace of the group.

The sales representatives have been warned not to approach the hotel's employees during the course of their stay. By the time they hit the departure gate at the airport the next afternoon, they can barely contain their enthusiasm, as they buttonhole weary travellers in the check-in line with the familiar opening lines of the ACN pitch.

"If I told you of a great new way to make money off your telephone, gas, and electric bills, and the bills of your neighbors, would you be interested?" a forty-something ACN representative named Don Rupp begins. The older blond woman behind him in line doesn't return his smile.

"It's a way to spend more time with your family, or at the beach, or doing whatever it is that you want to do," Don persists. He seems weirdly alert.

"No, thank you," she says, smiling tightly as the proper mental template for responding to strangers in airports snaps into place. "But thank you very much for asking."

The woman behind the check-in counter has heard the pitch at least a dozen times. "If I told you about a way you could earn money off the telephone, gas, and electric bills of your neighbors, would you be interested?" someone asks. She continues punching numbers into her computer terminal until the boarding pass is printed out. She folds the ticket into its jacket and hands it across the counter before she politely declines.

Strapped into his seat in the back of the plane as it leaves for Los Angeles, Don leans across the aisle and starts pitching his neighbor, a manufacturing representative, who promises to attend an upcoming meeting. Once the seatbelt sign goes off, the representatives spread the good news about the Opportunity to people in line for the bathroom and to members of the flight crew who are busy rolling beverage carts up and down the aisles. Ed Kustanovich is running through lists of friends, relatives, and business associates who might be interested in learning more about ACN, and whom he will contact on his cell phone the moment the plane touches down in Los Angeles.

Four days later, standing in the kitchen of his house in Simi Valley, Ed is still talking about the international convention in Columbus. "Any doubt I had in my mind, it walked away," he says. "I saw thousands and thousands of people. They wouldn't come all the way there to Columbus for nothing."

There are no rolling blackouts in Simi Valley. Ed's kitchen is full of new appliances, and the four bedrooms upstairs include a spacious master-bedroom suite. The window behind his head frames a scene of palm fronds waving gently back and forth in the breeze above the heated swimming pool where Ed swims his laps in the morning. When I ask him what's so wrong with his life here, he frowns.

"Real trouble in job when David approached me," he replies. "I think to myself, I cannot be slave. I've been slave before." If something bad happens on a job site, he says, he can be held liable under California state law. "There is lots of trouble sometimes with subcontractors. They make life sometimes miserable."

His wife, he adds, has a different answer. "She said, 'Midlife crisis,' " he says. "Usually I have dinner, watch TV, am exhausted, fall asleep on sofa. Now sharp change." After Ed excuses himself to call the members of his team, I spend some time with his wife in the kitchen, where she is standing over a pot of borscht.

"If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is," she says. "Now I wait and see."

When I speak to Ed's son, Vlad, a graduate student in human genetics, he tells me that his father's impulse toward greater freedom led to the family's leaving Russia, but it has also led to his interest in various unprofitable ventures and get-rich-quick schemes, like manufacturing pendants and joining Amway. "I thought Amway was garbage," Vlad says. "But I think this is very different. You don't need to buy Amway lotion or Amway shampoo." Still, he worries. "I talked to my friend, who is also a scientist," he adds. "He said, 'Don't do this. It's a complete pyramid scheme. The majority of people don't make any money. They just end up working for the few people at the top who do.' "

Ed is pacing back and forth outside the sliding glass doors with a cellular telephone clamped to his ear. "Hello!" he says. "This is Ed Kustanovich. How is everything? How is family?" He is staring up at the sun-dappled palm leaves over his head. "Listen. Can you do me huge favor?" He begins reciting the lines of the standard ACN script for drumming up new customers. "Would you be interested in a great new opportunity to make money off your neighbors' utilities and telecommunications bills in your spare time? No?" Ed pauses for barely a moment. "Can you do me huge personal favor as part of my training? Would you at least try my services?"

A week after the international convention, Ed has succeeded in assembling a team of five new representatives, who have gathered together for the first time. The master bedroom has been outfitted for the occasion with folding chairs and refreshments—bottled soda, plates of cut-up vegetables, a bowl of potato chips. Ed's inclination would have been to lay out a more hospitable spread, in true Russian fashion, but ACN's policy limits refreshments to items that anyone in the room could afford to provide. The new members sit on chairs or on the carpet, taking notes on legal pads, as David Halpern relates some important first lessons about the Opportunity.

"Don't get excited about getting new customers," he says with a friendly smile. "Your main role is to teach other people how to do the business." When they identify new prospects, it is important not to say too much. "Don't tell them anything about the business," he explains. "You pass them on to me."

It takes a moment or two for the message to sink in. Ed's friend Lyubov is the first to respond. She spends most of the meeting with her arms crossed over her chest. "Sounds so simple," she says.

"It *is* simple!" Ed says. "Now you understand what I'm doing, right? I have energy, and I give you energy!"

Next, David passes around some photocopied pages from "The Wave 3 Way to Building Your Downline," a popular network-marketing primer, and begins to paraphrase the text: "The government made the determination more than fifteen years ago that Amway was not an illegal marketing scheme. So it's a new era in network marketing right now."

In the wake of the Amway decision, the F.T.C. did establish clear rules that govern the practice of network marketing. David Halpern is careful to observe these rules, which require network-marketing companies to sell an actual, definable product and prohibit them from charging exorbitant membership fees or making representatives carry expensive inventories. ACN recruiters are also forbidden to suggest, even indirectly, any specific income that the company's representatives might expect to earn.

"Your job is just to present them with the Opportunity," David explains. There are skeptics, he adds, who theorize that the number of clients that a network is likely to attract is limited, and that eventually the number of new representatives will decrease, profit margins will shrink, and then the entire network-marketing structure will collapse. The name of this theory, he says, is "saturation"—a bugaboo that haunts the recruitment efforts of every network-marketing company on the planet. Luckily, David explains, saturation is a fiction; the pool of prospective ACN clients is, in fact, endless. Everyone in the room looks relieved.

"Do not answer the question 'What are your rates?' " David instructs. "This is network marketing. You are relying on the relationship."

The chain of faith that holds ACN together is forged, link by link, from the families and friends of the company's representatives. When you look around the room, it is easy to see this process in action. Lyubov is here because she believes in Ed. Michael is married to Lyubov. Marguerite, the one American-born person in the group, is here because Ed's mother was friends with her mother in Israel, and because she dreams of having more time to herself and of living without debt. Vlad is here because he is Ed's son and wants to support his father.

"I'd like to take copies of those lists from you," David says. The combined efforts of the new members have already yielded two hundred new prospects for ACN. Under the heading "How I know them," Marguerite has given short descriptions of the people she plans to call, including "Dad's friends," "dentist," "Adrian's friend," "Jeff's ex-wife," and "sold me my car."

With the lists in hand, David Halpern reminds people to "edify" their upline representative. "Sam is a top-ten producer in our company," he says. He is edifying Sam Friedberg, the upline representative who will play the role of "expert" for many of the incoming calls that Ed and his team will generate. "He's an M.I.T. grad, with a very successful career in engineering. And he's not just smart and successful. He's also a good guy, down to earth, likes people."

Sam Friedberg is a team coördinator, a position just below regional vice-president in the ACN hierarchy; last month, he says, he earned more than fourteen thousand dollars. He spends his days in the living room of a modest one-bedroom apartment in Torrance, sitting in an overstuffed reclining chair and fielding three-way calls from pros-

FIRST JOB BY JOHN UPDIKE

EARLY INKLINGS

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

"You're hired": sweet words, in this life of getting and spending. I have heard them rather rarely; my last regular paycheck was issued when I was twenty-five and poised to anoint myself a self-employed writer. My first paying job that I can recall was swatting flies ten for a penny on my family's side porch. The pay rate, considering the number and sluggishness of Pennsylvania flies, seems high; perhaps I broke my employers' bank. Though I was keen and eager, at the age of six or so, the job did not open out into a career.

Next, at the age of twelve, I worked for a weekly pass to the local movie theatre. I and some six or eight other boys would gather at the Shillington, with its triangular marquee and slanting lobby, on Saturday mornings, and be entrusted with bundles of little tinted leaflets, folded once like a minimal book, advertising the week's coming attractions. Shows, some of them double features, changed every other day and took Sundays off—gangster films, musicals, Disney cartoons, romantic comedies, Abbott and Costello, Biblical epics, all offering a war-beset, Depression-haunted America ninety minutes of distraction from its troubles. We boys were dispatched in pairs, some of us to territories as remote as Mohnton and Sinking Spring, and scampered up and down the concrete steps of hilly Pennsylvania to leave our slithering beguilements on expectant porches where tin boxes held empty milk bottles and rubber mats said in raised letters "Welcome." When the leaflets were gone—some very bad boys, it was rumored, would dump theirs down a storm drain—we returned to the theatre for our magic pass. More than once, to save the seven cents the movie-house proprietor had given us for the trolley car, my partner and I would saunter the several miles back to Shillington, between the shining tracks.

Next, a dark chapter. I must have been sixteen when I was deemed eligible to work in a lens factory in the gritty city of Reading. They were sunglass lenses, at least in our end of the plant—they came mounted on hemispheres fitted, in turn, onto upright hubs that held them under rotating caps in a long trough full of a red liquid abrasive called "mud." They had to be changed every twenty minutes, as I remember; I was always falling behind, and a foreman kept coming around to chalk rejection marks—white X's—on my overcooked hemispheres, with their blank and slippery eyes. The red sludge got all over you, inexpungeably, into hair, ears, and fingernails. A wan, Dickensian boy about my age tried to teach me the ropes, but my only prowess emerged at the brief lunch break, when a country skill at quoits enabled me to outscore my malnourished city-dwelling co-workers.

On the vast factory floor, various machines mercilessly thrummed around me, and my stomach churned. In my nervous moments of repose, I smoked cigarettes, flipping the butts right onto the scarred old floor. I could smoke all I wanted; the adults around me didn't care. But the consolation fell short: if this thrumming, churning misery marked the entrance to adulthood, childhood wasn't so bad. I quit after three days, promising my parents to work profitably instead at my strawberry patch on the farm to which we had moved. Agricultural labor is as mirthless as industrial, but the strawberry season lasted only three weeks of straddling the wide rows, as the sun baked your bare back and daddy longlegs waltzed up your arms. For the rest of the summer, I tried to write a mystery novel.

When I was eighteen, between high school and college, the editor of the Reading *Eagle* told me I was hired, as a summer copyboy. This was even better than swatting flies. It paid a bit better, too—thirty-four dollars and change in a small brown envelope every Friday. My duties were to hang around the editorial room, doing a breakfast run for the doughnut-prone, coffee-addicted staff and carrying copy into the Linotype room, where men in green eyeshades tickled the keyboards of the towering Mergenthaler Linotype machines. Their activity was noisily industrial, and smelled of hot lead and human confinement, but its product made sense to me. A copyboy's last duty of the day was to bring up a stack of fresh, warm newspapers (the *Eagle* was an afternoon paper) from the roaring pressroom and distribute them, with a touch of ceremony, to the editors, the reporters, and even the paper's owner, a local magnate who sat patiently in his grand front office. He always thanked me. I felt part of a meaningful process, a daily distillation, an installment of life's ceaseless poetry. This was my element, ink on paper. ♦

pective ACN representatives. He looks like an engineer from the fifties, with his close-cropped hair and heavy black glasses. Dressed in blue nylon sweatpants and a T-shirt, he surveys his living room, which he has furnished inexpensively with wall-to-wall carpeting, matching pine tables, and a seersucker couch. Arrayed on the living-room shelves are a few spare personal touches, including a Go board, a chess set, a menorah, a wax dolphin, and a white plastic-covered photo album with "Sammy's Bar Mitzvah" inscribed in gold lettering on the spine. The phone rings twice. Sam clicks a button, then presses the big black cordless receiver to his ear.

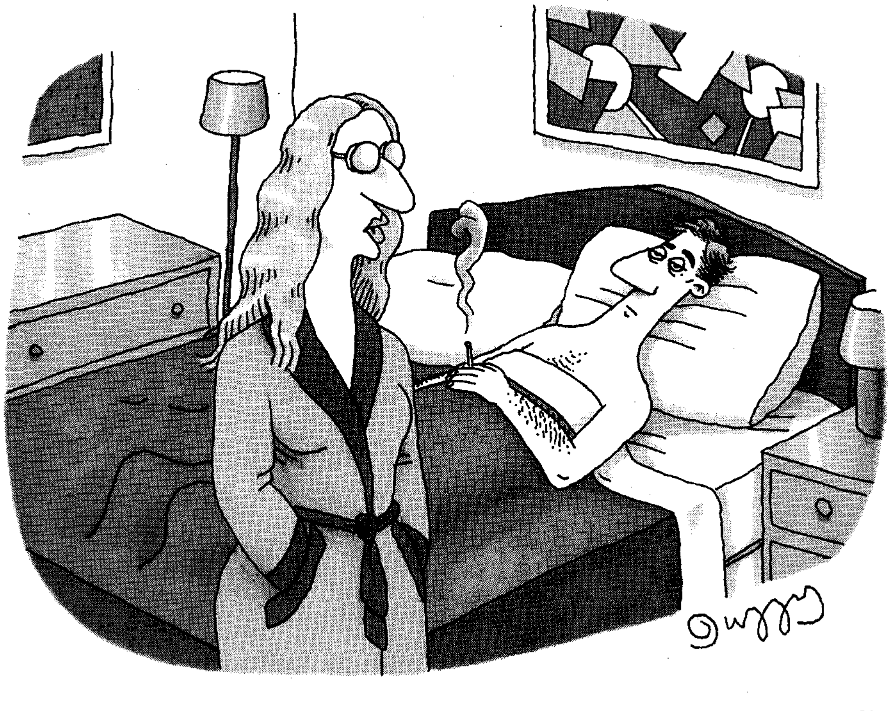
"You're currently working?" Sam asks, staring up at the ceiling. "No? I think people don't do that enough." After thousands of calls, he has learned to hit the right notes without thinking, encouraging the caller to believe that he is talking to a high-level corporate executive whose busy schedule has not yet erased his basic human capacity for empathy and understanding. "That's not a way to live," he says. He talks about building a sales force whose leaders will be rewarded with a percentage of the company's earnings.

"On a more personal level," he continues, proceeding to the heart of his pitch, "we want to be in a position, in two or three years, to be at the beach with our families, travelling, or wherever we want to be, knowing that tens of thousands of people are turning on their lights, cooking on their stoves, and making telephone calls, and we're getting paid." He tilts his feet toward the ceiling, displaying a pair of white tube socks with gray heels. In a blue plastic tub by his feet is a stack of résumés that Sam has harvested from the Internet.

In less than a minute, the phone rings again. He launches into his pitch, varying the phrasing and intonation to make it seem natural, and to keep his head in the game. "Our goal is to capture two per cent of the national market over the next two years—that's two per cent of six hundred and fifty billion dollars," Sam explains. "And on a more personal level . . ."

The rest of the pitch takes less than a minute. Between calls, Sam tells me about his own introduction to the business, which came through a friend at TRW, the technology-centered conglomerate he used to work for. When Sam first heard about ACN, he remembers, he thought it was a scam. Still, the job he had wasn't particularly appealing, either.

"We were all together in this big room with no dividers, no cubicles, just one big bay filled with desks," he recalls of his last project for TRW, which had to do with satellites. As he describes the room, his shoulders retract slightly, pressing hard into the back of his chair. "The air was thick. It felt thick when you walked in. My association would be with, like, a big general-population jail cafeteria that you see in the movies." He was terrified of spending the rest of his life at TRW, he says, working his way up to become a mid-level manager toiling late into the night on secret projects for eighty thousand dollars a year. "I remember my last performance evaluation," he continues. "There was a comment from one of my superiors, 'Sam would show up at ten and leave at six'—how the fuck did he say it?" Sam's face reddens slightly as he searches for the exact combination of words his superior used. " 'Which is not acceptable for someone assigned to work on a proposal.' It burned me up. First of all, I'm thinking, Who the fuck are you? Secondly, I'm thinking, You poor bastard, they've conditioned you to believe in all this. And, third, I'm thinking, If I get to be as good an employee as him, I'll be thinking that way, too."



"While I'm up, can I get you anything from the imagination department?"

One day, he met Brian Sax's roommate, Ed Niu, and another ACN representative at a Chinese restaurant by the highway. Niu himself was a lapsed engineer, and by the end of the lunch Sam Friedberg was feeling more enthusiastic about the Opportunity than he had ever felt about anything before in his life. "I like being around people who all feel they're going somewhere," he explains. "It's like we're all breaking free together from societal norms and corporate jails.

"It is something where one's success does depend in large part on one's belief in the Opportunity," he goes on. "The more strongly you believe, the more likely you are to succeed." Because David Halpern has faith, he says, he is likely to become a regional vice-president. As for Ed Kustanovich, he thinks it's too soon to tell. "I really like the guy," Sam says. "He's excited, he has a good attitude, he's coachable. If he can sustain that, he'll make it all the way." He pauses. "But most people can't sustain that."

For those who keep at it, network-marketing companies serve the same function as churches, political organizations, and other communities of believers. They soothe the discomforts of bad jobs, failed relationships, and other unmet expectations. The daily regimen of phone calls and meetings are sacraments of the shared conviction that past disappointments and failures can be redeemed by following the company's well-scripted plan.

Driving from his home in the Valley to a meeting with a producer in Hollywood, Joe Fortunato makes a few calls, telling friends, friends of friends, and total strangers about the Opportunity. He is building his downline, trying to stay a rung above David Halpern and a couple of rungs above Ed Kustanovich. The calls he makes ten or fifteen times a day, he says, offer relief for his anxiety. At Yale, he recalls, he wrote papers about "Gilligan's Island" and dreamed of becoming the youngest president in the history of network television, even younger than his hero, Brandon Tartikoff. He is now thirty-three years old and self-employed. His last girlfriend came from a wealthy family, he says, and she broke up with him because he didn't have enough money. "My goal through ACN is to make a few hundred thousand, so I can do the things that will get me to ten million, and from ten million I can get to a hundred million," he says. He stops for a moment, and starts talking about the screenplay he's writing. It centers on a stockbroker named Billy who lives in New York and becomes a superhero whose exploits are chronicled in the *Post*.

"There's a lot of people interested in my movie," he says. "But that's Hollywood. You can never really tell if they are interested or not." What matters now, he says, is working hard, sticking to the ACN program, and keeping his "belief system" strong.

Jeff Carlisle's belief system is perhaps the strongest of any ACN representative in the state of California. A blond, well-tanned man in his mid-thirties, with the dazzling smile of a talk-show host, he is a regional vice-president and one of the leading money-earners in the company. His main function in the organization is to motivate others, by giving speeches and instructional seminars, and simply by being an example of the good things that can come to those who have faith. He has worked as a salesman since he was nineteen years old. Before coming to ACN, he was a real-estate broker in Los Angeles. Before that, he sold sand.

I.R.S.
I.R.S.
Shanahan

"He's hit, and he's hurt. Now we'll follow his audit trail and finish him off."

• •

When I meet Carlisle at a café in Manhattan Beach, he wants to talk about a glimpse of the high life he got while on vacation in the Spanish resort town of Marbella. He is dressed in a lightweight jacket and a pair of expensive-looking synthetic pants; his new Mercedes is parked a block away. "This guy I met was forty-four years old, he owns all the Living Room clubs, he owns thirty-five restaurants. His family owns the second-largest diamond mine in the world. 'Come to my house in Marbella, I spent fifteen million dollars for a party house,' he says."

The name of the house, he continues, was Villa Caesar. "There's gold pillars throughout, statues, just like the Caesars Palace hotel," he says, squinting a little. "There were thirteen bedrooms and two indoor pools. Each bedroom had a full-sized Jacuzzi next to the bed. I went down to the bay, and I counted forty-seven yachts over one hundred feet long."

Carlisle readily admits that his fascination with rich people has something to do with the experience of growing up poor in Iowa after his parents divorced. There he watched his single mother work three jobs, and drove to school in a rusted-out Chevy Vega. "I just felt very different," he remembers. "And not in a good way. I felt outside of the normal life that was available to everyone else, driving up to school in this shitty car, working after school, and not being able to have new clothes."

As he talks about these memories, it's clear that what makes Carlisle a great salesman is that he has such direct access to his emotions. The desire for money is the deepest thing in him, a salve for wounds that refuse to heal. When he started selling door-to-door in the summers, he says, he found that he could get anyone to like him within the space of ten or fifteen seconds. People loaned him their cars to use during his rounds. They gave him the keys to their houses so that he could take a beer from the fridge or swim laps in the pool.

"That's when I knew that there was something outside me," he remembers. "That I had triggered something out there in the universe that would give me whatever I wanted."

The Opportunity is founded on the hopeful premise that the company's network will continue to grow. Protecting that belief can be a demanding task for sales representatives, because it often collides with more traditional codes of behavior, especially toward one's family and friends. Ed Kustanovich's faith in the company appears to be strong; every day, as he drives to his job on a construction site in downtown Los Angeles, he works the cell phone, repeating the script that he has learned by heart. But there's at least a hint of trouble, brought on by an E-mail he received from his best friend, Mike. He gives me a copy to read. The text of the E-mail is friendly and polite. It also provides an exceptionally clear description of how network marketing can feel to those on the receiving end.

"Dear Ed," the letter begins.

> I am sorry to disappoint you with my decision not to pursue ACN. I know you are disappointed in me. It is hard to say no when I know that you are so excited about ACN.
>
> I was considering signing up for the service so I could save some. $'s on utility bills . . . but after carefully considering it, I realized I was reacting to hype, pressure and obligation! The main reason I showed up to the presentation was because of you Ed—my friend. Because I value you as a friend I will be straightforward with you with my concerns about ACN.
>
> ACN relies on your ability to persuade and manipulate your friends and relatives. . . . You cannot help but expect people to sign up for the program, and if they don't, you are naturally disappointed. . . . Is the chance of eroding a relationship really worth it? I don't think so.

Describing the ACN representatives as "relentless and pushy," he also notes their refusal to provide before-and-after examples of utility bills or any other evidence of savings. "Ed, it was nice to see you and your wife," the letter concludes. "You seem to be much happier. I apologize if I have disappointed you in any way.

"Sincerely, Your friend—Mike."

The house in Hermosa Beach shared by Chris Bodig and David Halpern offers a wonderful view of the water and of the joggers, dog walkers, and rollerbladers who crowd the boardwalk on weekend afternoons. On Sunday evenings, it is a favorite location for private business receptions, or P.B.R.s, the group meetings at which new prospects are introduced to the Opportunity by Brian Sax and the other members of Ed's upline.

Standing in front of the large-screen television set in his living room, Chris Bodig edifies Brian Sax, who is looking even more confident than usual in a new suit and freshly crew-cut hair. "He's one of the most impressive people I've ever met in my life," Bodig says. He looks around the room at the dozen or so prospects. The mixture of people in the room suggests the range of those who are attracted to the Opportunity. There is a well-dressed black woman who works as a lawyer for a Hollywood studio; a man who recently moved to Los Angeles from Philadelphia; a middle-aged Asian man, whom I'll call Akira (he requested that his name not be used), who owns a recording studio in the Los Angeles area; a man who works at a garage; another man who makes baseball bats; and two Hispanic stockboys from the local grocery. As Brian begins his pitch, Ed and his wife sneak in the door and find a place by the couch.

Brian is especially forceful this evening; in a few days, he will be heading off to Las Vegas for a special meeting of the company's regional vice-presidents. His shoulders squared like a corporal rallying his troops, he quotes statistics estimating the national energy market at six hundred and fifty billion dollars and tosses out questions to the crowd.

"Is it just me, or did we miss the boat on the Internet?" he asks. The founder of Amazon, Jeff Bezos, graduated several years ahead of Brian at Princeton. No matter what happens to Amazon, he says, Jeff Bezos and fifty of his associates are set for life. But, for those in the room this evening, what ACN offers is a second chance at success. "M.C.I. stock has split ten to twelve times," he says. "Can you imagine what's going to happen with *our* stock? Where in corporate America can a person working for a company be in the position within a few years to outearn the C.E.O. of that company?"

"Nowhere!" The loudest voice in the room belongs to Ed. His wife looks shyly around the circle of faces, marvelling at how many people are here.

Brian's presentation is followed by a short training session. Afterward, the representatives circulate through the room to answer any remaining questions that the prospects might have.

"A pyramid scheme is illegal," Ed Niu explains to a newcomer, David Herrera. "No one gets paid here unless you get customers."

"I would love to do it," Akira, the Asian man, tells Joe Fortunato as they stand together in a corner of the kitchen. "But I have to convince my wife to let me touch my savings."

Half an hour later, the two men are still locked in conversation.

"My name is important to me," Akira insists. "I want to know that my customers will be saving money."

"I don't tell people that," Fortunato parries. "My integrity is important to me, too." His face darkens. "If two hundred thousand people weren't happy with their bills, wouldn't they switch?" he asks. He is searching for a way out of the impasse that Akira has created with his polite but pointed questions. "Tell them, 'At least give me the credit that I know my business,' " he says.

Sensing a problem, Brian Sax walks over and puts his arm around Fortunato's shoulders as Ed Kustanovich lingers by a bucket of melting ice. "He's responsible for so much great leadership for our team," Brian offers, edifying his friend. But Akira refuses to budge.

"Is there any way to compare the actual rates?" he asks.

"Why do you need that information?" asks Ed Niu, who has come over from the other side of the room to help out. "I don't sell anybody on rates. And they're still with the service. We need volume of customers. Then we can start driving rates down."

"If I enroll, he makes a hundred and fifty dollars?" Akira asks. "I wish I could know a bit more in detail about what happens here. You can't pay out more than you take in." Behind his polite smile, and his occasional show of looking down at the kitchen tile, he clearly has some idea of how the system actually works. "Are you going to build a new power plant?" he presses, cocking his head expectantly to one side. "Because, with what the total profits were for the company last year, that's not going to do it."

"You're thinking like corporate America," Fortunato answers. But Akira has nothing against corporate America. He is a member of a group of four hundred of his countrymen who help each other in business by pooling their resources, he explains. He trusts them, and they trust him.

"How can I explain this to my

friends?" he asks. "That eventually the rates might go down, but that in the meantime they are losing ten dollars a month?"

When the private business reception is over, I am driven back to my hotel by the man who has the distinction of being Brian Sax's first recruit as well as his best friend. His name is Quoc Tran, and he is a thin Vietnamese man who spends his days running distances of up to fifteen miles and watching war documentaries on the History Channel. His father was a South Vietnamese marine, he says, who died in a reëducation camp after the Americans left. His hatred of authority, he says, came from growing up in Vietnam during the war.

As we make our way up I-405 at night toward Los Angeles, Quoc remembers the night he left Vietnam on a boat with his three brothers and his mother. "I got very, very sick," he recalls, swinging the wheel over to the right. "I had an extreme fever. I was hallucinating. There was talk that I might be contagious. They would toss people over the side if they were contagious." He peers out over the dashboard, steering with one hand draped over the top of the wheel as he cuts across two lanes and heads for the nearest exit. "I had to move from the top level to the bottom level of the boat. It was so hot, I can't tell you. I would smell the urine and all that stuff. We were down in the very bottom pit."

Quoc's mother wanted to go to France, but he insisted on America, "the freest goddam country in the world." I urge him to turn left at the next light. He ignores my directions, and tells me about arriving in a small town in Indiana in 1980. He was amazed at how big the people were, and how clean and fresh everything seemed. "But there was a memory inside me that was still hurting," he says. "Everywhere you turned, there was another reminder of Vietnam. There was 'Rambo,' and there were also the things that I remembered. There was a lot of anger in me," he says. "I thought to myself, How could a country so big, so powerful, lose the fucking war?"

When Brian first told him about ACN, he recalls, he thought he had found the answer he had been looking for. "It just turned on so bright in me, it was indescribable," he says. I look out the window and realize that we are lost in South Central Los Angeles. I encourage Quoc to turn the car around.

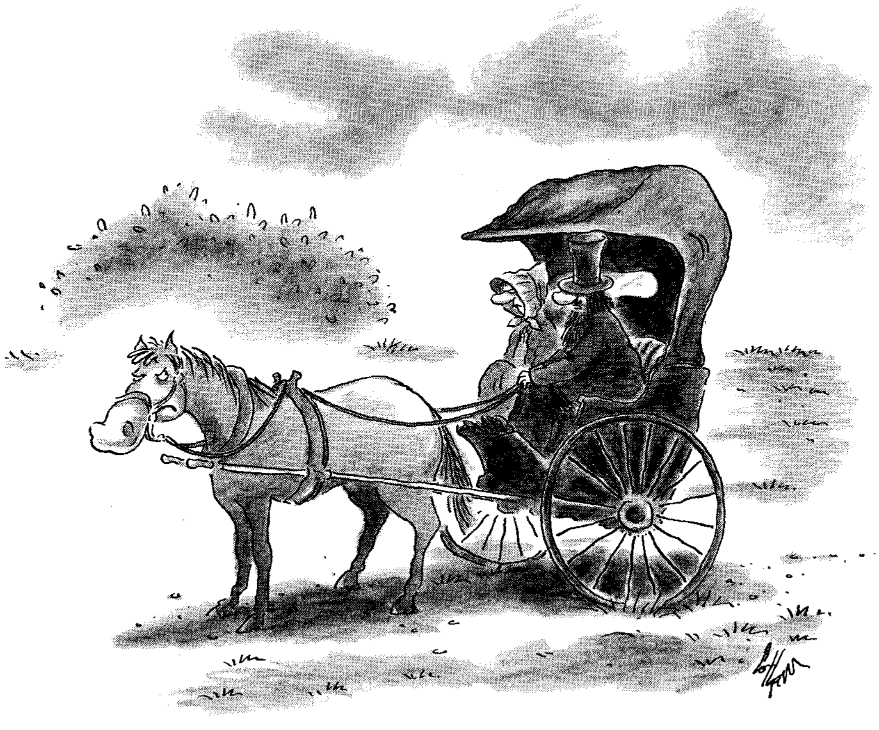
"The light was so bright inside me that I couldn't sleep for days," he continues as he pulls into a gas station, then heads back toward the lights of West Hollywood. "Because everything is energy, Dave. The company is about energy. I was pure energy. The energy was just unbelievable." The feeling lasted for about six months, Quoc says, after which he began to feel the presence of another force that was working against him. There was a time in his life, he continues, when he went into seclusion. He talked to angels. He looked deep into his soul. What he understood then was that there was no authority in the world that could ever govern his thoughts or his actions. ACN was just another kind of authority, he concluded, a way of controlling people's minds by exploiting their capacity for belief. What he wants for himself right now, he explains, is something much larger and brighter, and more difficult for outside forces to get at.

"I want to be a true democrat," he explains as he drops me off at my hotel. "I want to have what Thomas Jefferson had in his own mind."

Six weeks later, I get a phone call from Brian Sax, just back from the most recent ACN international convention, which was held in San Jose. "You wouldn't believe the energy," he says, and continues in the same vein for another few minutes, until he arrives at the point of the call.

"Guess who the most successful new member of the team is now," he says. "It's Ed! Ed's team has fourteen members. He's doing great. A lot of that is thanks to John." He asks me if I remember the long-haired artist who was Ed's first recruit. John Gomez cut his hair, Brian says, and has become one of the company's leading salesmen.

"And guess what Ed gave as the reason for his success," Brian says. When it came time for the team to share their stories in San Jose, he says, Ed stood up and talked about arriving in America, and then mentioned that someone—a writer from New York—had told him, not so long ago, that network-marketing companies often fail, and that he might have trouble succeeding as a salesman because of his accent. Ed was determined to prove that person wrong, he said. He would succeed. And now, thanks to ACN, and to all the people in the hotel room that evening, he had. ♦

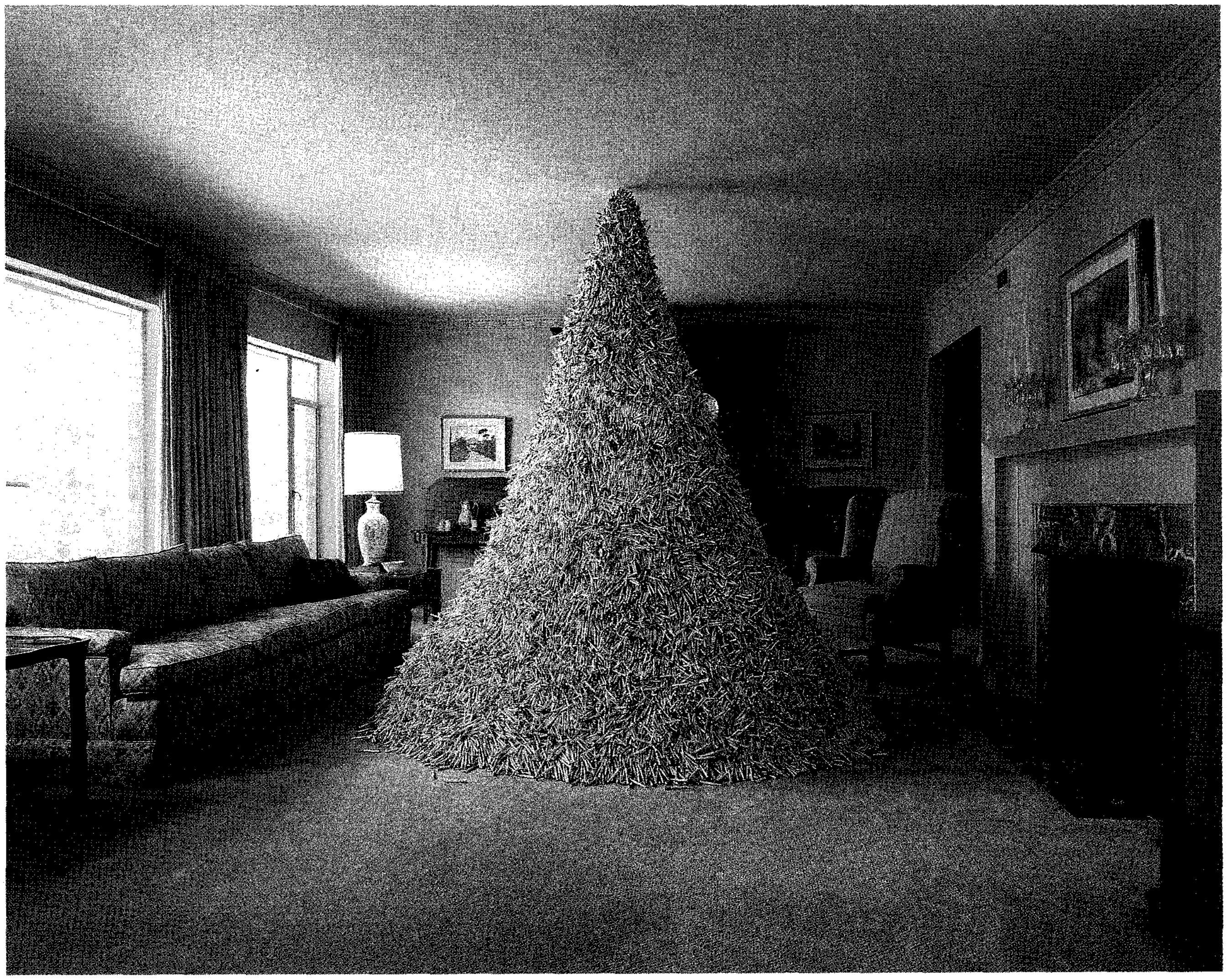


"In a front-end collision, the horse will absorb most of the impact."

FICTION

DALTON'S BOX

BY DESMOND BARRY



"You remember Mick Dalton, don't you?" my brother said. "Tall feller with spiky black hair. Always fancied himself as a bit of a godfather type, right?"

"Aye," I said. "Great bloke. Played cricket with you, didn't he? For Glyn Taf Engineering?"

"Aye, before he went to jail the last time."

My brother took a big swallow of his Brains S.A. and then set the pint down on the table in front of him.

"Anyway," my brother said, "four months ago, he wins three thousand quid on the National Lottery."

"Never."

"Aye. So I says to him, right, 'What you gonna do with the winnings then, Mick?'

" 'Invest it,' he says."

"Oh, fuck," I said. "What was it this time?"

"Import-export," my brother said.

"Not again," I said.

"He's got a better plan now. He says, 'I'll pay off the debts, about five hundred quid, then I got just the scheme for a three-hundred-per-cent return on the initial outlay, like. But nothing too heavy. Nothing the dogs can sniff out, like. It's fags.' "

"Fags?" I said.

"Aye. Fags. Contraband Marlboro cigarettes. Two thousand five hundred quid's worth. So Mick gets on the phone to Spain, where his mates are now, and asks this bloke Harry Smalls if he can get him these fags, right? So Harry says, 'Aye, I can get them for you, but you have to do this right, innit? Set up a company, see. If I try to send through a bloody big box addressed to you personally, customs are bound to open it up to have a look inside.'

" 'Fair enough,' Mick says. So he thinks a bit. 'Oh! Right!' he says. 'I know

GEOF KERN, "LIFETIME OF CIGARETTES"

just the thing. I'll register a company called British Drain. You can ship the box with a load of pipe on top. Even if they open it, it'll look legit, unless they really dig down.'

" 'Brilliant,' Harry says.

"So Mick registers the company and rents a prefab unit on the Bryn Morlais Industrial Estate for a hundred quid a week: a minor additional investment, like. He's got a chair in the office and the mobile phone, and he sits there waiting for the delivery. Two weeks go by, right? Then this big lorry pulls into the car park: International Express. Must be the fags. Out goes Mick.

" 'British Drain,' he shouts. 'You got a delivery for British Drain?'

" 'Aye,' says the driver. 'There's a box in the back.'

" 'I'll take it,' says Mick.

"The driver looks at him. 'You'll take it, will you?'

" 'Aye,' says Mick.

" 'Well, it's four hundred kilos, mate. Fetch us the forklift.'

"So Mick says, 'Oh, damn! The forklift! I had to put it in to the mechanic this morning. Hydraulics are fucked.'

"The driver says, 'Well, how'm I supposed to get this box off, then?'

" 'Hang on, mate,' Mick says. 'No problem, I'll get in the motor and have my mate next door come over and give us a hand.'

"Car keys outta the pocket. Into the old Polo. He shoots across to Wesley's Builders Supplies, where his mate works in the yard. He pulls in, and this mate of his is already on the forklift, stacking pallets of bricks.

" 'Evan,' Mick says, 'bring the forklift next door a minute. I got a delivery.'

"Evan is that long-haired bloke with thick glasses, lives up on Quarry Row. Anyway, Evan, cool as you please, lays a brick pallet down, reverses the forklift, and swings it round next to Mick's car.

" 'Not a fucking chance, son,' he says. 'Knowing you, it's prob'ly fucking red hot.'

" 'I swear to God,' Mick says. 'It's just pipe.'

" 'Just pipe?' he says.

" 'Swear to God.'

"Evan says, 'Look, get the lorry round here, and I'll take it off for you. At least you won't be holding the driver up, then. But Wesley'll sack me if I drive the forklift out of the yard.'

"So Mick goes back to his unit at the industrial estate and persuades the driver to pull into Wesley's. Evan unloads it, and there it is: a big fucking wooden box in the middle of the yard. And the lorry drives off.

" 'Keep it here,' Mick says. 'Coupla days, no more.'

" 'Not a fucking chance,' Evan says. 'I don't know what the fuck is in there, but get it outta here before Wesley sees it. Or the cops show up.'

"Mick is fucking gutted, like. Evan won't budge. Nothing for it but to hire a flatbed lorry, a small, unforeseen addition to the investment, but what the fuck? Got to be done. He drives down to Baker's Garage and rents one for the day. Hundred fucking quid, just to get the box from Wesley's yard to his unit. Anyway, long story short, Evan puts the box on the back of the flatbed. Mick drives it round to the unit and reverses the lorry into the bay. He pulls the roller doors shut and gets up on the flatbed to sort the box out. Crowbar. Creak creak. Pull back the straw, and what's in the box? Pipe. Fucking loads of plastic pipe. Piece by piece, faster and faster, he tosses the pipe out onto the concrete floor of the unit, pipe plunking everywhere, and then, about halfway down, he comes across a box of fags, then another one. He counts twenty-five boxes of a hundred fags. Marlboros, right? And then there was more black pipe. So all he's got is two thousand five hundred fags.

"What the fuck is this all about, like? He doesn't even jump off the back of the lorry. Straight on the mobile. Top-dollar international phone call.

" 'Harry,' he says. 'What the fuck is going on, son? I asked for two thousand five hundred quid's *worth* of fags, not two thousand five hundred fags.'

" 'No problem, son,' Harry says. 'Dry run, see. Had to know if they'd get through customs and that. Next delivery, you get the full hog.'

" 'Next delivery?' Mick says. 'When'll that be?'

" 'Coupla weeks, no more.'

"Coupla weeks. Well, the unit is costing Mick a hundred quid a week. So he has to get some casual work. He asks Evan next door at Wesley's to keep an eye out for the delivery and call him on the mobile when it comes. Plenty of fucking casual on the railway these days. That's it. Laborer for Railtrack, fixing the lines.

"So there he is now, Mick, out under the pissing rain humping railway sleepers and levering steel rails about for the next four weeks, getting more and more para that Harry's stiffed him. Anyway, one Wednesday afternoon the mobile finally rings.

" 'You better get up here fast, son,' Evan says. 'There's a fucking big box sitting outside the unit. I assume it's for you.'

" 'Thanks for taking it off the lorry, mate,' Mick says.

" 'I didn't take it off,' Evan says. 'It was there at two o'clock, after I got back from the canteen.'

" 'Oh, aye?' Mick says. 'Well, thanks for ringing, Ev.'

"Now, how did the box get there without a forklift? Mick smells a rat, like. So he puts the phone back in his pocket and yells to the foreman, who's about fifty yards up the tracks.

" 'My mother's had an accident,' he says. 'Gotta go up the hospital straight away. My father on the mobile.'

"So the foreman is like, 'Is she all right?'

" 'Car accident,' Mick says. 'Don't fucking know, mate. I gotta go.'

"Fair enough. The foreman lets him go. So Mick runs down to where he's parked his car. Over the fence, into the Polo, and he takes off. But he doesn't drive straight up to the unit, right? He goes the long way through Pant Gerrig, so that he can approach the industrial estate from the top of the mountain. Better view of the whole scene like that. And sure enough, he comes over the hill by the cemetery, and there's the box, sitting in the car park. But what does he see on a side road by the I.C.I. rugby field? There's these two bloody great Ford vans: a white one with two big bruisers inside, and a black one with blacked-out windows and three more bruisers on the bench seat. He memorizes the black van's number plate, drives across the overpass, around the roundabout, and out of sight into the Brychan Housing Estate. He parks down on Second Avenue. Out with the mobile. He has to check the number. So he calls up this girl he knows, Jillian Rees—he's shagged her a few times—works for the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency. All the contacts, like, Mick.

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" 'Hiya, Jill,' he says. 'Check this number for me, love.'

" 'Hang on,' she says.

"A couple of minutes later, she's back on the line.

" 'Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, love.'

" 'Thanks, Jill,' he says and he closes the phone.

"Well, that's it. What's he gonna do now, like? He doesn't want to deal with any fucking box of contraband fags. Or the customs. So he goes off to the pub. He has about four pints in the Cross Hands before Evan shows up for his after-work beer.

" 'What about that fucking box, then?' Evan says, setting his pint down.

" 'Leaving it there.' Mick says. 'Customs are all over it. Waiting for me to pick it up.'

" 'Thought you said it isn't dope,' Evan says.

" 'It isn't.' Mick says. 'It's fags.'

" 'Fags,' Evan says. 'Fucking hell.'

"They sit there a minute in silence.

" 'But look,' Evan says, 'that box is sitting in your car park, addressed to British Drain, which is registered in your name, innit? Sooner or later, they'll come looking for you anyway. And another thing—you can't leave that box there. It's right next to Brychan Housing Estate, home to three thousand fucking burglars, junkies, and con artists. Some thieving bastard is bound to notice that box before long, and that's the fucking end of it. Customs or no customs, they'll have it out of there. Either way, like, you're fucked.'

" 'Ah, Evan!' says Mick. 'You're a fucking genius, son. Someone is indeed going to steal that box. And I know just the man to do it. Ikey Pearse, the best fucking burglar on the Brychan Estate. He'd do it for a couple of hundred quid.'

"So right away Mick gets on the mobile to Ikey. Tells him about the box. And the fucking customs, fair play.

" 'Look,' says Mick. 'It could be red hot. Give it a few days, right? Wait till them customs blokes get sick of staking it out, then get it outta there. Even if they pick you up, they can't do you, 'cause I'm not going to press charges, am I?'

" 'Brilliant,' Ikey says.

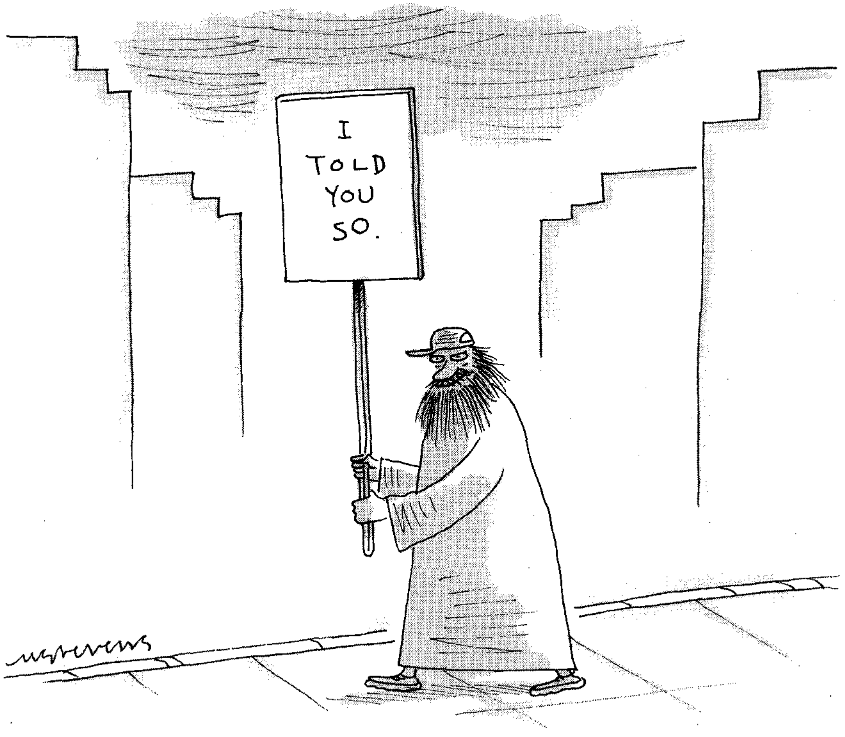
" 'Thing is,' says Mick, 'you'll need a fucking forklift.'

" 'No problem,' Ikey says. 'I got a mate. This gypsy. Up on the Bogie Road. Got a fucking flatbed, son. With a big fucking Hiab hoist on it.'

" 'Brilliant,' Mick says.

" 'It'll cost you five hundred quid,' Ikey says.

"Five hundred quid! Fucking hell. More investment in the project, like, but Mick figures he'll still make a profit if Ikey pulls it off. And if anyone can pull it off, Ikey Pearse can. 'Done,' says Mick, and closes the phone.


I TOLD YOU SO.

“So Ikey waits four days before he does the business. A fucking moonless, wet, and cloudy night, as they say. Normal for the town of Blaentaff, innit? Ikey gets the gippo with his truck. Mick drives around the industrial estate first for a recce. No sign of either one of the vans. They must have got fed up. After all, it’s only fags, innit? Mick drives back into the Brychan Estate and tells Ikey the score. Then he goes off to wait for him in the pub.

“Ikey, the gippo, and two of his mates get in the lorry. They come out of the Estate, drive around the roundabout and down the steep hill. There’s the box in the car park, right outside the unit. They pull in. Out of the cab. The gippo swings the cable down from the Hiab. Ikey and one of his boys fastens it around the box, the gippo works the levers, and the box swings up onto the flatbed. They undo the cables, they’re back in the cab, and away they go. No sign of any customs. Going up the hill, back toward the housing estate, they hear this horrible scraping sound, then a hideous thump, and Ikey looks behind. The box is sitting in the middle of the road. They hadn’t tied it down, had they? And it had slid off the back of the flatbed.”

“Oh, fuck,” I said.

“Nothing else for it. Ikey and the gippo jump out of the cab to get to the hoist, and the next thing they know, right out of nowhere, there’s about sixty fucking customs men all over them, blue lights flashing on their unmarked cars, like a major fucking drugs bust.”

“All over, like.”

“Well, they haven’t got Mick, but they take Ikey and each one of his boys to a different district police station, right? And they use the gippo’s lorry and the hoist to get the box back on the flatbed, and down the station they go with the box.

“Then these two customs hard cases come into the interrogation room to get into Ikey. One of them’s a Cockney, right?

“ ‘You are going down for fifteen years, my son,’ the Cockney says.

“Ikey shakes his head. ‘Fifteen fucking years. What are you talking about?’

“ ‘Fifteen years, my son. That’s a major offense you were caught doing.’

“ ‘Major offense?’ Ikey says. ‘It’s just a wooden box. Sitting next to the Brychan Housing Estate for five days. If I hadn’t got it, somebody else would have. I can’t get fifteen years for salvaging a fucking box.’

“ ‘Do you know what’s in that box?’ this Cockney says.

“ ‘Not a fucking clue,’ Ikey says.

“ ‘Two million pounds’ worth of Moroccan cannabis,’ the copper says.

“ ‘Fuck off,’ Ikey says, totally fucking incredulous.

“ ‘I kid you not,’ says the customs bloke. ‘Come on, Ikey, boy. Let’s go’n ’ave a look.’

“Out they go. Ikey in tow. And the sergeant comes behind with the crowbar. There’s the box, in the basement garage of the cop shop. Creak creak. Up come the slats, and the sergeant pulls back the straw. Out comes the first piece of black pipe, then the next, then the next. Then they find the contraband. A box of fags. Another box of fags. And on and on, until they get to the next bit of black pipe. Not even a fucking gram of cannabis.

“ ‘Fags,’ says the sergeant.

“ ‘Oh, fags, is it?’ Ikey says. ‘I never would have guessed.’

“ ‘You bastard,’ the Cockney says. ‘You knew all along, didn’t you?’

“ ‘I knew fuck all,’ Ikey says.

“Red as a fucking beet root, the old Cockney. ‘Get this fucker out of here,’ he says.

“What a fucking embarrassment, like. Think about it. Sixty fucking customs men, for five days, sitting in unmarked cars and two vans, watching a box full of fags. What did that cost Her Majesty’s Government? Too much to make it worth taking Ikey and his mates or Mick to court. The Cockney bastard wouldn’t be able to look a fucking judge in the eye, would he? All that money, men, and resources for a few thousand fags, like. So they all get away. Scot fucking free. Well, scot fucking free—not exactly.”

My brother took a sip of his pint.

“What happened to the fags?” I said.

“Customs kept the ones that they seized, right? And the first lot, well, with the initial outlay of two thousand five hundred quid, plus the rent on the unit, the hire of the flatbed truck, and the five hundred quid Mick still owes Ikey, at the end of the day, like, each of those fags is worth over a quid and a half, right? Mick’s got no choice, has he? At that price, he won’t give one to nobody. He’s in his house on the Brychan Estate, smoking every one of them fucking fags by himself.” ♦

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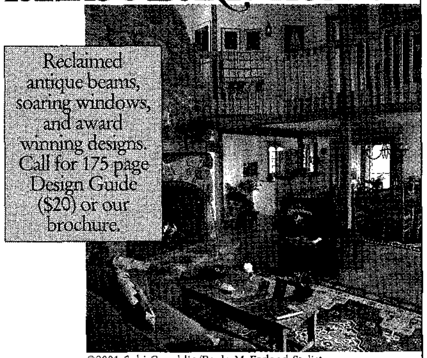

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THE CRITICS

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POP MUSIC

THE ENTERTAINERS

Learning from Los Lobos.

BY NICK HORNBY

What a piece of work is a boxed set! How infinite(ish) in faculty! In action, how like an angel! This, at least, is what all serious music buyers tell themselves when they have just spent fifty dollars or more on another impeccably packaged and exhaustively annotated four-to-twelve-disk set. You get home, bursting with anticipation, and sit down to listen to the first half-dozen songs of a beloved artist's recording career, and to read the weighty accompanying essay, and then, somewhere along the line, a vague disappointment kicks in. You become irritated that your favorite song is represented only by a demo or a live recording or an alternate mix that omits the horns. Pretty soon, you find that you're playing only the last few tracks on the second CD—tracks that you probably already own. A few weeks later, you realize, guiltily, that the fourth CD has not yet been removed from the box, and that it never will be.

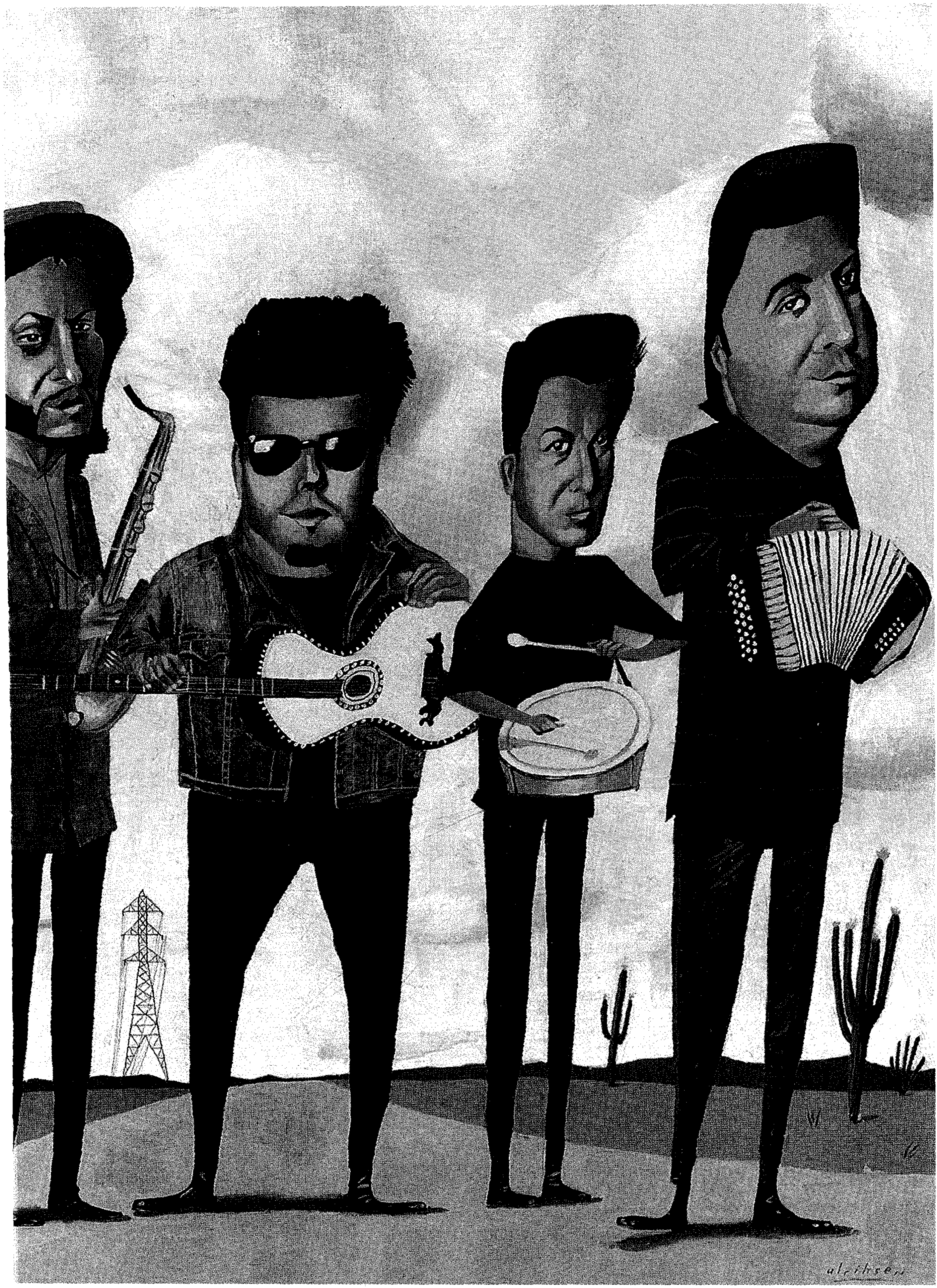
There is a reason that the fourth CD is likely to remain unplayed. Boxed sets tell the same story over and over: the artist hits the ground running, perfects a sound, makes too much money, and starts turning out music that is self-parodying or overblown or desperate to latch on to whichever current musical trend happens to be passing. Enoch Powell, the English M.P., once observed something to the effect that all political careers end in failure, but at least no politician—unlike, say, Rod Stewart—has ever attempted to go disco on us.

I have a very simple, though dismayingly dull, rule governing the purchase of boxed sets: buy only collections by major twentieth-century artists, people whose names you are likely to find in a reputable biographical dictionary. The Dylan Bootleg Series is essential, as are the Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin anthologies on Atlantic—in the last case because the inevitable artistic decline took place at the expense of another record label. The James Brown and Bob Marley boxes describe the invention and sophistication of two hugely important musical genres. As for the rest, however much you tell yourself that you've got to come to grips with the post-Fleetwood Mac career of Stevie Nicks, you'd be better off not forking over that fifty dollars.

Nobody would argue that Los Lobos' relatively straightforward Chicano R. & B. changed the course of pop-music history. And yet "El Cancionero," the band's four-CD retrospective, covering a recording career that has lasted twenty-three years, is a joy from beginning to (almost) end. So much pleasure is rare in collections by far more influential artists (I defy anyone to listen to the Byrds box in its entirety), but the fact that Los Lobos have never really had their moment—at least, not a moment that the world at large might

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK ULRIKSEN

The secret of Los Lobos' long-running appeal is that they make music people can use.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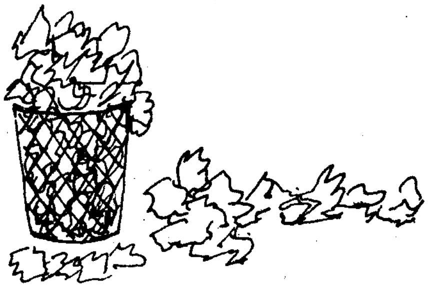
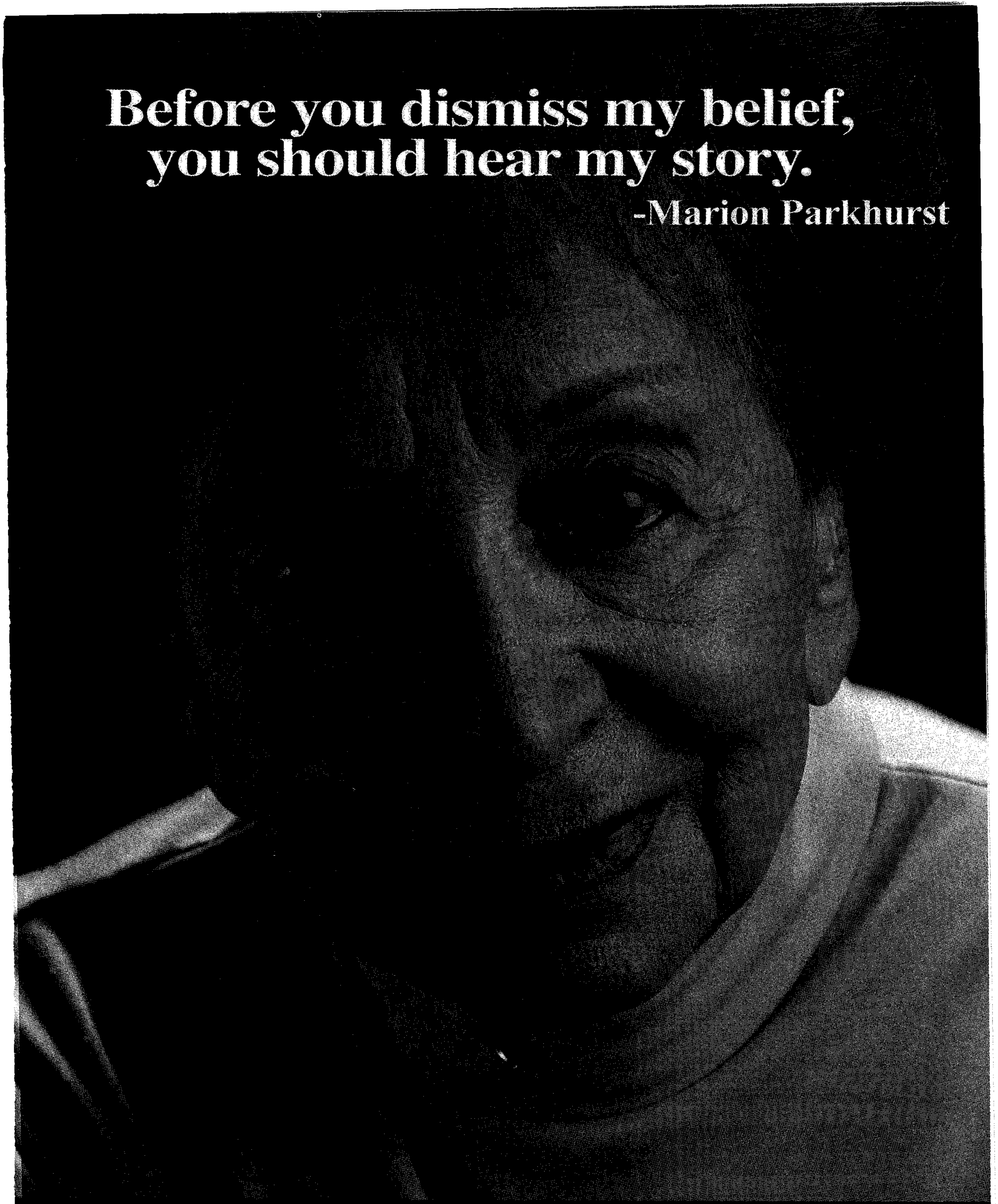
have noticed—says much about what makes this boxed set so appealing. This is not a band that has ever been able to rest on its reputation, much of which has been acquired through the sheer determination to entertain. "El Cancionero" sounds more like a couple of two-hour sets at a wedding reception than like a bid for posterity, and is all the more refreshing for it. That must have been some wedding.

Apart from Steve Berlin, who joined the band in the early eighties, the five members of Los Lobos have been playing together since 1973, when they made a local name for themselves by switching between rock and roll and traditional Mexican music at every community function in East Los Angeles that would have them. Pop music is all about becoming rich and famous in the shortest possible time, but there is something to be said for playing regular gigs at joints like the Red Onion, as Los Lobos did: by the time they began recording, in the late nineteen-seventies, they were proficient in ways that their punk peers never achieved. The second track on "El Cancionero," a bolero entitled "Sabor a Mí," features deft supper-club-sweet acoustic-guitar solos from three of the band's members. This is not an anthology that begs indulgence for the early years. Los Lobos eventually benefited from the energy of the punk ethic—its earliest rock recordings were for Slash, the legendary L.A. punk label—but their years at the Red Onion had clearly given them a professionalism that would serve them well.

Los Lobos' full name is Los Lobos del Este (de Los Angeles), a cheeky homage to an apparently cheesy polka band called Los Lobos del Norte. But, if this suggests a certain cool-dude, second-generation irreverence for parental favorites, there is no trace of cheekiness on the opening track of "El Cancionero"—a loving and disarmingly pretty version of "Guantanamera." This, though, is the Los Lobos way, and a good number of the eighty-odd songs here are uninflected versions of old *cumbias* and *rancheras* and *corridos* and boleros—even the band's one proper hit recording, a cover version of Ritchie Valens's "La Bamba," features a refreshingly traditional acoustic exit. Across the Atlantic, and at almost the same time, the young and punk-forged London band the Pogues, who also had an irreverent and culturally specific full name—Pogue Mahone, or "Kiss my ass"—were similarly intent on disinterring old Irish ballads and rebel songs. The Pogues were musically less accomplished than Los Lobos (although they were fronted by a brilliant, if self-destructive, songwriter, Shane MacGowan), so they contented themselves mostly with giving their Irish heritage a ferocious pounding. Nonetheless, this synchronicity was significant. After fifteen or twenty years of listening to straightforward rock and roll, the pop audience had begun to cast around for new stories, new instrumentation, even new rhythms. In the end, of course, the innovation gets swallowed up by the corporate pop mainstream, which then burps out Ricky Martin, but for a moment it was possible to imagine a polylingual and polyrhythmic future for pop music.

What is striking about the first couple of disks in the "El Cancionero" set is that, although Los Lobos can slip from one musical language into another with admirable ease, these languages never get confused. If "Guantanamera" is played with a remarkable and un-ironic innocence, then the first original song in the collection, the generic "We're Gonna Rock," is as straight-ahead as anything by Jerry Lee Lewis. There is, initially, little interest in cross-pollination. This is one reason that it is perfectly possible to listen to great chunks of the five hours of music on "El Cancionero" without getting sick to death of it—you're getting two bands for the price of one. Oddly enough, it isn't until 1988, when Los Lobos were invited to contribute to Hal Willner's strange and brilliant "Stay Awake," a collection of Disney songs covered by an eclectic selection of artists (and of interest to your small children only if your small children are fans of Sun Ra and Tom Waits), that something distinctive begins to emerge: the Los Lobos





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-Marion Parkhurst

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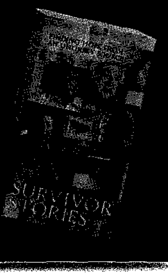

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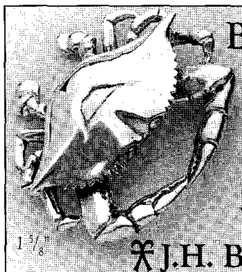

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version of "I Wan'na Be Like You," from "The Jungle Book," is slinky, percussive, and funny, and wound over and under those liquid, pretty, and unmistakably Hispanic acoustic guitars is an utterly great and indisputably mainstream American sax solo from Steve Berlin.

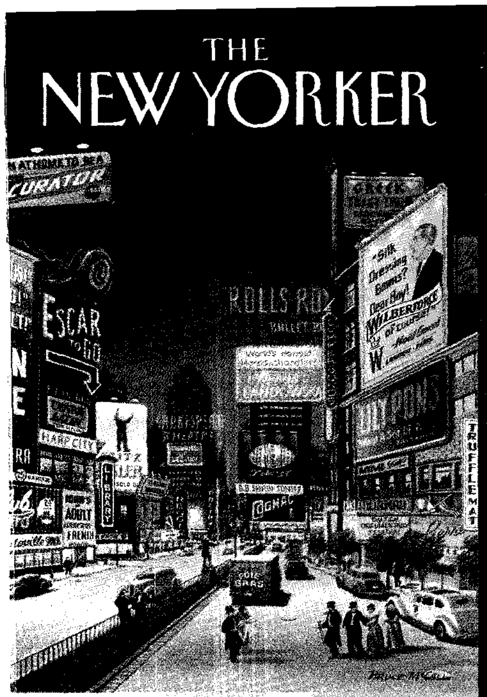
Any song in which someone is obliged, as Cesar Rosas is, to sing the line "I'm the king of the swingers, the jungle V.I.P." can make only modest claims for itself, but here it sounds like a defining Los Lobos moment. By contrast, "Will the Wolf Survive?," from the band's first full-length album, sounds like foursquare white rock, with only the faintest pinch of chili.

To point out that there is a clear distinction between two styles of music is not the same as saying that there is a lack of distinction in their execution. I cannot comment with any real confidence on the *cumbias* and the rest; the rock and roll, however, is played with verve, swing, and fiery skill. Indeed, there is a moment on the first CD—the electrifying opening to "I Got Loaded," which sounds like an R. & B. standard but isn't—when you might find yourself asking whether anyone who has ever been smitten by pop music can fail to have his heart stopped by the chords, the swing, and, once again, Steve Berlin's wonderfully greasy sax. I suspect that there is a generation of young people out there to whom "I Got Loaded" may sound like nothing more than a piece of Gap retro marketing, but the rest of us are likely to hear it as rock's binary code.

The third disk of "El Cancionero" contains several tracks from Los Lobos' richest and most ambitious album, "Kiko," which is now nearly a decade old. "Kiko" is dressed up in one of classic rock's sharper suits—"That Train Don't Stop Here" wouldn't sound out of place on one of Van Morrison's deep-grooved R. & B. albums, and you can hear the Band's facial hair in the stately folk rock of "When the Circus Comes"—but the instrumentation is more exotic than on anything similar from the same period, and the rhythm section provides a limber funk that is way beyond the grasp of most guitar rock acts. By this stage in their career, Los Lobos had learned how to fuse their two styles. There's nothing quite like the intoxicating "Saint Behind the Glass," during which a Veracruz harp cascades all over a skiffly bass and drum to create the kind of perfectly measured admixture that the band had been threatening for years.

If "Kiko" marked the peak of the band's career, the descent since then has been gentle, if not quite imperceptible. Only four tracks on "El Cancionero" are taken from Los Lobos' last studio album, "This Time," and although three of the four are comparable in quality to the music on "Kiko" ("Viking" is heavy-metal anonymous), there is a sense that Los Lobos has arrived at the place they were trying to get to. What you hear now is a band that knows what it wants to play and how to play it, and if that seems too removed from the sound of artistic reach and endeavor, then the remainder of this set is probably not for you. On the evidence of the last CD, the one that, traditionally, never comes out of the box, the members of Los Lobos do not spend much time trying either to re-create youthful glories or to siphon off Mos Def's audience. Nor do they seem baffled as to why they no longer generate quite the same cultural heat that they once did. Instead, they moonlight, in various combinations, on such side projects as the Latin Playboys (sexy, ambient, and modern), Los Super Seven (back to the Mexicana), and Houndog (deep blues); make solo albums; and fall into unlikely collaborations (with, among others, Money Mark, of the Beastie Boys). These musicians are not likely ever to be without work. Who else, after all, would be capable of providing covers for tributes to Richard Thompson, Doc Pomus, and Johnny Thunders, and then nipping off to record a song for a Robert Rodriguez movie?

"El Cancionero" ends, bathetically, with a weedy and ill-advised cover of Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On," some of which is sung with spirit, but no discernible soul, by Sheryl Crow, and it's the only time that the band comes close to pretentiousness or discomfort. The rest of the set sounds like a working band making music that people can use—at weddings, parties, anywhere. Perhaps unwittingly, Los Lobos have stumbled across the secret of the great boxed set: forget about the grand historical statement, and simply make people dance. It is, after all, what the music was invented for. ♦



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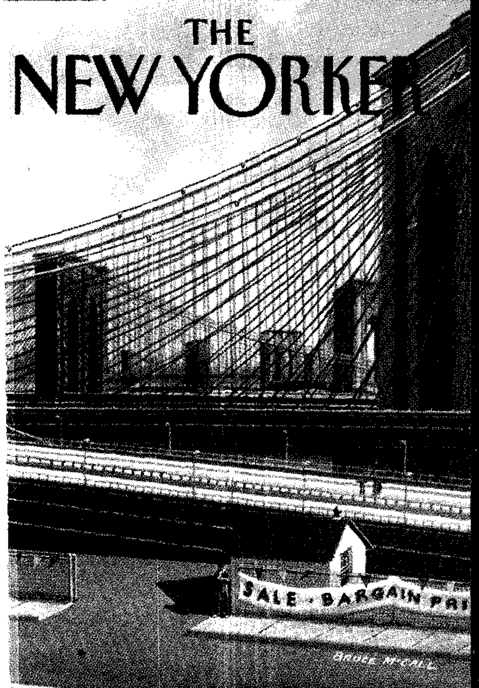

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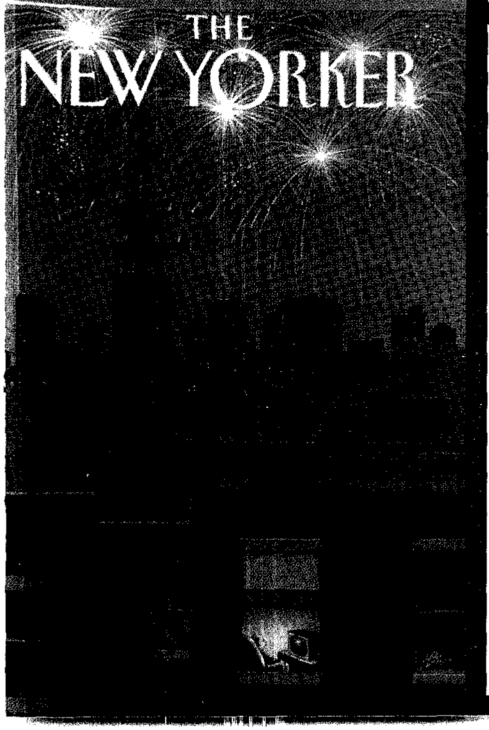

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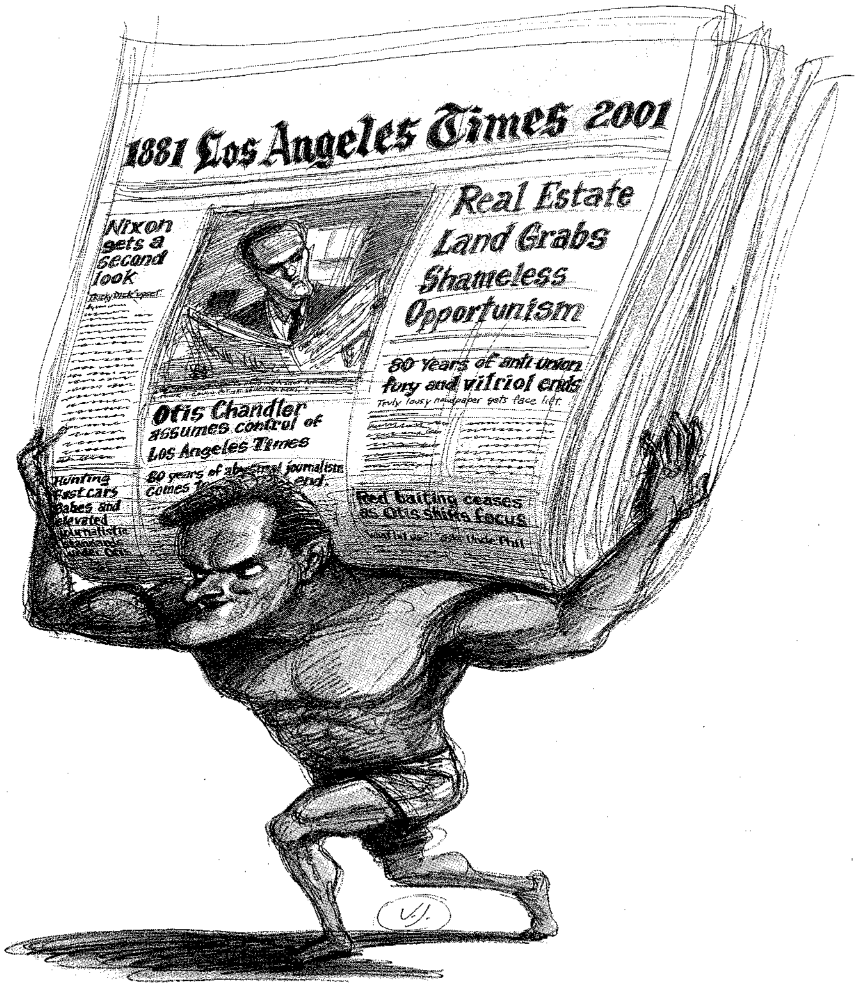
CHANGING TIMES

How L.A.'s rotten rag got good.

BY HENDRIK HERTZBERG

For something that has to do with Los Angeles, the Los Angeles *Times* has been around for a long time. It began publication on December 4, 1881, which means that it will observe its hundred-and-twentieth anniversary this year. And, since the Los Angeles *Times* is one of the three or four best newspapers in the United States, there will be many things to celebrate—all of them recent.

During the opening eighty of those hundred and twenty years, you see, the Los Angeles *Times* was known for one thing above all: its badness. This badness was of no ordinary kind. The L.A. *Times* was venal, vicious, stupid, and dull. It was abominably written and poorly edited. It existed to advance the unfathomably reactionary political views of the family that controlled it and, even more, to aggrandize that family's private economic interests. Though it had plenty of money—for nearly the whole of the twentieth century, it carried more advertising than any other paper in the country—its meagre allotment of national and international news was lifted from other papers or pulled lazily from the tickers of the wire services. Its political coverage was propaganda. Its local coverage was a combination of gaseous


1881 Los Angeles Times 2001
Nixon gets a second look
Tricky Dick upset
Real Estate Land Grabs Shameless Opportunism
80 Years of anti-union fury and vitriol ends
Truly lousy newspaper gets face lift.
Otis Chandler assumes control of Los Angeles Times
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Hunting fast cars babes and elevated journalistic standards under Otis
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"What hit us?" asks Uncle Phil
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boosterism and outright suppression of anything that might inconvenience the business community, especially those considerable sectors of it in which the paper's owners had a direct interest. The great S. J. Perelman, in an account of a train trip to California, wrote, "I asked the porter to get me a newspaper and unfortunately the poor man, hard of hearing, brought me the Los Angeles *Times*."

Dennis McDougal devotes almost half of "Privileged Son: Otis Chandler and the Rise and Fall of the L.A. *Times* Dynasty" (Perseus; $35) to explaining how the paper contrived to grow so fat while being so bad. (The other half explains how it got so good so fast while growing even fatter, and recounts its struggles to stay that way.) But he doesn't convey much of a sense of what that badness was like for a reader of the paper from day to day.

So here's what was in the L.A. *Times* for Monday, November 1, 1954, to take a day at random. (Well, not entirely at random—it's from the first drawer of the New York Public Library's highly incomplete microfilm holdings of the paper.) There was a midterm election the next day, but the screaming banner headline—UNIONIST MURDER CASE FIGURE GIVES SELF UP—concerned another of the *Times'* obsessions, the villainy of organized labor. The secondary headline got down to business: STEVENSON TALK VICIOUS, NIXON SAYS. The story below consisted almost entirely of the full text of an attack by Vice-President Richard M. Nixon—whose political career, by the way, was largely a creation of the Los Angeles *Times*—on a speech given a couple of days earlier by Adlai E. Stevenson, the 1952 Democratic Presidential nominee. The first section of the paper was given over mainly to political news. A typical example was CANDIDATE OWINGS RAPS JAMES ROOSEVELT RECORD, on page 7. The subhead: "Communism Called Very Real Election Issue for Voters of 26th District." Under a four-column photo of candidate Owings, his lovely wife, and their three young daughters, an unbylined story began:

> Republicans, Democrats and independents have joined to back Ted Owings for Congress in the 26th District and to beat "the intruder," James Roosevelt, who lives outside the district and, as Owings says, "doesn't think enough of the people of the 26th to want to reside among us." . . .
>
> "In this district, too, I firmly believe Communism to be a very real issue," Owings said. "Where I have been attacked and smeared by the Communist newspaper, the Daily People's World, James Roosevelt has its support. This is not surprising to me since he has a long record of attracting those sympathetic to the Communist cause."

It's all quite as awful as its reputation, though not quite as omnipotent: James Roosevelt, the eldest of F.D.R.'s four sons, won his House seat the next day (unusually heavy turnout among the Communist masses?) and went on to serve five terms.

"Privileged Son" is a great freeway pileup—part biography, part dysfunctional-family chronicle, and part institutional and urban history, with generous dollops of scandal and gossip. Dennis McDougal brings a pertinent set of experiences to his task: he is a hardened writer of true-crime books; he is the author of "The Last Mogul: Lew Wasserman, MCA, and the Hidden History of Hollywood," a similar tale of power, greed, and behind-the-scenes manipulation in Southern California; and he is an alumnus of, or refugee from, the L.A. *Times*, having spent the eighties as an investigative reporter there. (His years on the paper apparently left him with some scores to settle, and he settles them with gusto.) McDougal writes out of the side of his mouth. "Privileged Son" is pulp nonfiction, purple and slangy. Describing one of Otis Chandler's big-game-hunting adventures, he growls, "The trigger is squeezed and that long, lethal phallic symbol barks death across the Alaskan icescape." He introduces a misadventure in Otis's courtship of his first wife this way: "Everything would have come together like the thin plot of a Harlequin romance if Otis hadn't been such a horn dog." His metaphors can be as mixed as what he calls "L.A.'s diverse, dislocated populous": a politician's "political antennae picked up on the grassroots cynicism," while Upton Sinclair's "dim view of corporate America's amoral greed shone from the pages of his books." The McDougal *mot* is not always *juste*. A character makes "the politically correct decision to marry the boss's daughter"; or tries "to preserve an air of false modesty"; or grins "a toothsome grin"; or "smiled benevolently at all the little people and gave them faint praise for making his inspired capitalism possible." But that's all right: we know what he means—the decision was astute, the modesty bogus, the grin toothy, the praise hypocritical. The inadvertent verbal slapstick does not make the book any less enjoyable; in some ways it makes it more so. Some of the material will be familiar to readers of "The Powers That Be," David Halberstam's terrific history of four media companies, published in 1979. McDougal lacks Halberstam's synthesizing skills, but the vast amount of detail he has accumulated advances the story by an order of magnitude.

The Los Angeles *Times* has been passed down—lo, unto the sixth generation—from father (Harrison Gray Otis) to son-in-law (Harry Chandler) to son (Norman Chandler) to son (Otis Chandler) to board of directors (with scores of avaricious Chandler heirs in the background) to outside corporation (the Tribune Company, as in the Chicago *Tribune*, which absorbed it last year, bringing the family's ownership to an end). In retrospect, the dynastic founder, Harrison Gray Otis, seems a faintly comic figure—pompous, scheming, perpetually enraged, festooned with outlandish military pretensions. But he was sinister enough at the time. Born in 1837, in Ohio, Otis served with distinction in the Union Army throughout the Civil War, acquiring valuable Republican political connections and rising from private to lieutenant colonel. Thereafter, he styled himself Colonel Otis—up until the turn of the century, when, at age sixty-one, he persuaded President McKinley to grant him a short stint on active duty as a brigadier in the Philippines during the waning days of the Spanish-American War. He thereafter insisted on being addressed as General Otis. He was from the start a type now distressingly familiar: the self-righteous, free-enterprising rugged individualist whose ascent is facilitated by timely appointments to the federal bureaucracy. A stint in the Government Printing Office enabled him to save enough money to take a flyer on a scheme to raise Angora goats out West. The goats proved a bust, but Otis knew a land of opportunity when he saw one, and in 1882 he bought a quarter interest in the fledgling Los Angeles *Times*. The town—raw, wild, and arid—had twelve thousand inhabitants, the paper four hundred subscribers.

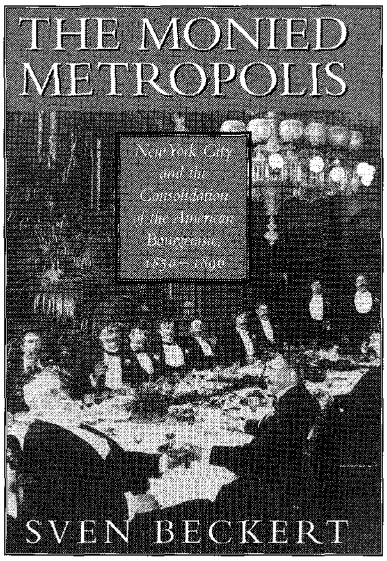
That same year, a nineteen-year-old Dartmouth dropout named Harry Chandler arrived in Southern California. He took a twelve-dollar-a-week job in the circulation department of the Los Angeles *Times*, but he was not content to be a salaryman. Newspaper distribution in Southern California then was handled by independent contractors. As Chandler rose in the *Times'* hierarchy, he used his savings to buy up paper routes, and by the time Harrison Gray Otis had taken full control of the *Times*, a few years later, Harry Chandler had quietly monopolized the distribution not only of the paper he worked for but of its competitors as well.

Chandler's next move established a pattern of ruthlessness, bordering on criminality, that would continue for decades. Subscribers to certain papers began noticing that their copies were delivered late or not at all, and their delivery boys confidentially advised them to switch to the more reliable *Times*. Before long, and without ever quite knowing why, the Los Angeles *Tribune*—the *Times'* most formidable rival—found itself bankrupt and out of business. The Colonel, who had no sons, was well pleased with his clever employee. The relationship between the two men was sealed in 1894, when Harry Chandler, then thirty, married one of the publisher's daughters. A son, Norman, was born in 1899.

The growth of Los Angeles was exponential. By 1900, its population was a hundred thousand; by 1910, more than three hundred thousand; by 1920, nearly six hundred thousand; by 1930, well over a million. The *Times* and its ruling family drove that growth and profited hugely from it. General Otis's special contribution was a bitter war against unionism, which climaxed in the dynamiting, after midnight on October 1, 1910, of the Fortress, as the General called the Times Building. (He also called his house the Bivouac, his second home the Outpost, and his staff the Phalanx.) The bombing, which killed twenty-one people, was an unmitigated catastrophe for the labor movement. Two militants of the ironworkers' union were indicted for the crime. The entire American left geared up to portray them as martyrs, and Clarence Darrow signed on as their lawyer. But Darrow discovered, to his dismay, that his clients were guilty, and provably so. Organized labor simply disappeared from Southern California, not to return until well into the Great Depression, and then only fitfully.

The contribution of Harry Chandler,

"A fascinating history of New York during the late nineteenth century... dazzlingly successful."
–*Kirkus Reviews*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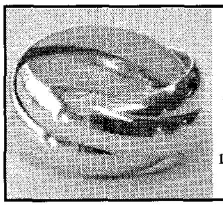

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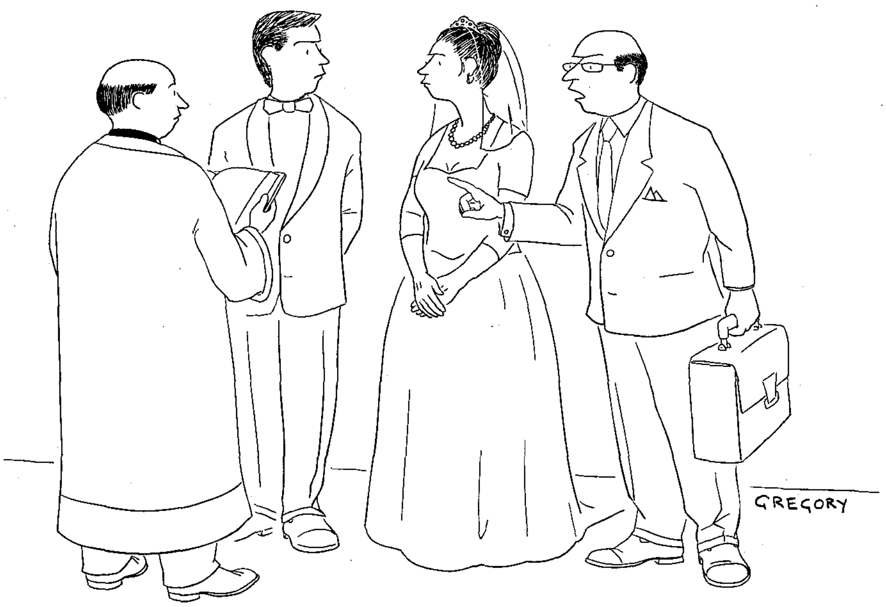

"My client doesn't have to answer that."

• •

who officially became publisher in 1917, when the General died, was to expand the paper's power—or, rather, his own—over the political and economic life of the region. He was an insatiable buyer and seller of land; more than a million and a half acres passed through his hands. What he and his syndicates did wasn't really speculation, though, because the fix was always in. Harry was at the center of the Owens River affair—the diversion, at public expense, of Sierra Nevada water that made possible the development of modern Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley. (The John Huston character in "Chinatown" was based partly on Harry.) "Privileged Son" provides fascinating accounts of this and many, many of Harry's other business adventures. In the strangest and wildest of them, he plotted, during Mexico's revolutionary convulsions of the mid-teens, to break Baja California off from the rest of Mexico and set up what would have been, in effect, his own country; there was even a plan to name one of its provinces Otis, in honor of his father-in-law. He had a hand, and an insider's share, in the birth and growth of virtually all of Southern California's industries: Hollywood (he erected the famous hillside sign, and Charlie Chaplin's first movie was shot in the rebuilt Times Building, in 1914), aircraft manufacturing, airlines, shipping, broadcasting, and, above all, real estate. Harry's brand of capitalism was the kind one associates with the oligarchs of Latin America. It was based fundamentally on land ownership, and it involved ruthless political manipulation, the use of publicly funded improvements for private gain, cronyism, private armies (as in the Baja episode), and suppression of information. It was half Protestant ethic, half banana republic. And it got about as much coverage in the L.A. *Times* as Kremlin power struggles used to get in *Pravda*.

Harry's son Norman was an altogether blander, less daring character than his father. He was a conservator, not a buccaneer. Along with the paper, his inheritance included reactionary politics and a loathing of unions. But he was content to leave the details to Kyle Palmer, the *Times*' political editor from the early twenties until the beginning of the Kennedy Administration. Palmer—whom McDougal variously describes as a gnome, a dwarf, an imp, and a bushy-haired munchkin—was more of an operative than a journalist. When some Republican politician had to be forced off the state ticket to make room for a Chandler favorite, it was Palmer who made the call. The L.A. *Times*, to him, was not a pulpit, let alone a school; it was the gun in his waistband.

Norman may have viewed the *Times*' prominence on East Coast ten-worst

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lists with indifference, but his wife, Dorothy, known as Buff, did not. Buff—who had joined the family against the wishes of her fiancé's female relatives—may not have had a social conscience, but she did have social ambition, which can sometimes propel a person in more or less the same direction. Her indefatigable fund-raising for her pet cause, the Los Angeles Music Center, brought her into contact with the newly rich of West Los Angeles and the movie colony, some of whom were politically liberal Jews, a demographic for which the Chandlers had never had much use. She enjoyed going to meetings of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, where she met people like the Sulzbergers, of the New York *Times*, and the Grahams, of the Washington *Post*. They did their best to conceal their contempt for her husband's newspaper, but she sensed it all the same. Observers differ on how much credit she deserves for maneuvering her son into the publisher's chair—McDougal assigns her a somewhat less prominent role than does Halberstam. Nevertheless, Otis's ascension, at the age of thirty-two, represented a victory for Buff over her in-laws.

On April 11, 1960, in the ballroom of the Biltmore Hotel, Norman Chandler, at the end of a speech mentioning sacred trusts, grave responsibilities, utmost confidence, seriousness, and competence, presented his successor to an audience of seven hundred distinguished citizens and the world. McDougal:

> First, dutiful applause rippled through the ballroom followed by dead silence as Norman stepped aside and his blond, blue-eyed hunk of a son bent into the microphone. As exploding flashbulbs lit up the dais, Otis uttered his first word as publisher of the Los Angeles Times.
>
> "Wow."

The few *Times* staffers in the room could be forgiven if they failed to recognize that their savior was standing before them. Otis Chandler looked like a surfer dude. He sounded like a surfer dude. Come to that, he *was* a surfer dude: riding the waves was his greatest passion, and he was very good at it. He was good at track and field, too. The second thing he said, after "Wow," was, "If someone were to hand me a shot put right now, I think I could put it seventy feet!" In fact, he had once thrown the metal ball more

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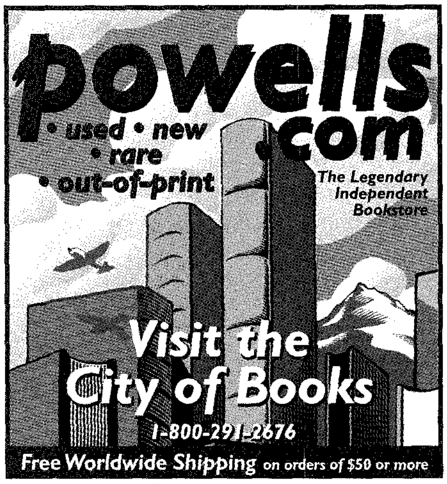

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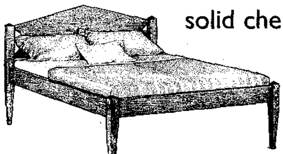

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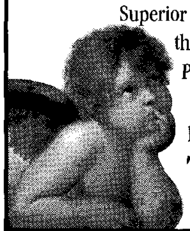
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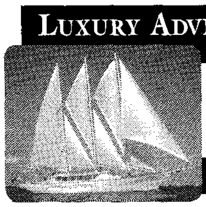
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than fifty-seven feet, eight inches short of the world record. But for a last-minute injury, he would have been on America's team in the 1952 Olympics. He was tall, rangy, broad-shouldered, jut-jawed, and handsome, with a godlike body bulked and sculpted by weight lifting and athletics. He liked cars and girls. He was not an intellectual.

At Andover, Otis had been assigned a black roommate, and they got along beautifully. At Stanford, he had written his senior thesis on the Holocaust. As a young track-and-field star, he had toured Europe, learning from his African-American teammates and his European hosts that the world was a complicated and interesting place. Still, he was a Chandler, so no one expected the miracle that was about to occur: at first slowly, and then with ever-accelerating speed, Otis put news in the paper. When he took over, the L.A. *Times* didn't even have a bureau in Sacramento, the state capital. Soon, there were bureaus in New York, Chicago, Houston, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, Hong Kong, Rome, Moscow, London, Saigon, New Delhi, Nairobi—eventually more than twenty overseas. He staffed them with good reporters, who were given high salaries, ample expense accounts, and plenty of space for what they wrote. He started a Sunday opinion section, a book review, a daily calendar section, a Sunday magazine, and regional news sections for L.A.'s sprawling suburbs. There was news about science, education, and organized labor, whose leaders began to be treated as something other than insurrectionary criminals.

Otis's Declaration of Independence, his Ninety-five Theses, was a five-part series, published in March of 1961, exposing the hypocrisy, bigotry, and paranoia of the John Birch Society, an influential right-wing organization notorious for labelling Dwight D. Eisenhower "a conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy." The institution most affected by the series was not the Birch Society, whose antics had been thoroughly reported elsewhere, but the Los Angeles *Times*. Back East, the condescending smirks faded. Inside the Times Building, Otis's uncle Philip Chandler, who had a job as the paper's vice-president and general manager, flew into a rage. Philip and his wife were Birchers, and their political views were shared by many other Chandler relatives. Philip confronted his brother. Norman explained that his son was now in charge, and Philip soon resigned.

After the 1960 campaign—Kyle Palmer's last hurrah—the paper's political reporters began to quote Democratic candidates for office as well as Republican ones. Nixon's bathetic "last press conference" tantrum after his ignominious defeat in the 1962 race for governor of California was locally perceived as an attack on, of all papers, the Los Angeles *Times*. The *Times* had merely covered the campaign; to Nixon, given what he was used to from the paper, that felt like character assassination. By 1970, it had run an editorial headed GET OUT OF VIETNAM NOW. The squabbling Chandler heirs, who, under the terms of Harry's will, controlled most of the stock, did not like the paper's new political direction. But money kept them pacified. The L.A. *Times* turned out to be even more profitable as a good newspaper than it had been as a bad one. Its daily circulation topped a million by the end of Otis's first decade. From 1968 through 1980, the earnings and revenue of the Times Mirror Company quadrupled. It bought magazines, broadcasting stations, publishing houses, and newspapers (the Denver *Post*, the Dallas *Times Herald*, the Hartford *Courant*, *Newsday*), and turned itself into a media powerhouse rivalled only by Time Inc.

Even so, Otis was no longer enjoying his job. He wanted to spend less time giving speeches, hiring editors, and approving budgets and more time driving fast cars, shooting big animals, and hanging ten. Stress had given him a debilitating spastic colon. He had met a new woman, and was on the cusp of a messy divorce from his wife of nearly thirty years. So in 1980, at fifty-three, he kicked himself upstairs to "editor-in-chief" and chairman. None of his three sons seemed to him a suitable successor, and Times Mirror was no longer truly a family enterprise but a vast corporation whose board was increasingly dominated by non-Chandlers. From now on, the publishers of the L.A. *Times*—there would be quite a few of them, and their tenures would grow ever shorter—would come from outside.

The momentum Otis had established

carried the paper through the nineteen-eighties, and the *Times* closed out the decade bigger and better than ever. Its circulation was at its peak: it sold 1.2 million copies a day, surpassing the New York *Daily News* as the country's biggest metropolitan daily. But it faltered a little in the early nineties, opening the way for the reign of Mark Willes, whose background (marketing breakfast foods at General Mills) and M.O. (downsize and thrive) had earned him an unforgettable nickname: the Cereal Killer. The depredations of Willes, who became the C.E.O. of Times Mirror in 1995 and appointed himself publisher of the *Times* itself in 1997, quickly became legendary, at least among journalists: the execution of the New York edition of *Newsday;* layoffs in the thousands; an incoherent and disastrous plan to "tear down the wall" between the newsroom and the business office by installing an advertising manager to "work with" the editor of every section of the paper. Willes proclaimed the absurd goal of boosting circulation, which had dipped down toward the million mark, by fifty per cent. His annoying corporate jargon ("core business," "thinking outside the box," "sustainable competitive advantage") made reporters despair. The greatest embarrassment of all, toward the end of 1999, was a special issue of the paper's Sunday magazine which was all about the new Staples Center, a huge indoor stadium. The profits from the issue were secretly shared with the Staples Center. When word of this arrangement leaked out, there was a tremendous uproar. From his retirement retreat up the coast, Otis Chandler, now seventy-one years old, wrote an open letter to the *Times* staff. A brave editor read it aloud in the city room. It denounced the Staples deal as "unbelievably stupid," charged that the editorial staff had been "abused and misused," and concluded, a little awkwardly, "The trust and faith in a newspaper by its employees, its readers, and the community is dearer to me than life itself." When the editor looked up, signalling that the reading was done, McDougal writes, "the still gathering crowd erupted."

The Willes fiascoes made the *Times* an unhappy place, but the truth is that none of the company's internal travails of the past decade—all of which McDougal recounts with relish—had more than a marginal effect on the newspaper that readers actually saw every day. (No one reported the Staples mess better then the L.A. *Times*, which devoted a special fourteen-page section to an exhaustive account by its distinguished media reporter, David Shaw.) A year ago, when a rump faction of the board went behind Willes's back (and Otis's) to sell Times Mirror to the Tribune Company, the staff's anger was directed mostly toward the swarms of idle Chandler heirs, who contrived to guarantee a better deal for themselves than for the other stockholders, and toward Willes, who floated away on a golden parachute that, according to McDougal, gave him "somewhere between $85 million and $100 million for his five years of 'work' for Times Mirror." The new regime, which Otis refers to as the "two Johns"—John Puerner, formerly the publisher of the Orlando *Sentinel*, and John Carroll, formerly the editor of the Baltimore *Sun*—has been greeted with general relief. The glory days may be over, and the L.A. *Times* may now be just another banal subsidiary of just another banal conglomerate, but there is something to be said for having sober, competent grownups in charge.

Otis Chandler made himself competent by dint of earnest application, but one trick he never managed was to grow up. As a vigorous, still strapping man of seventy-three, he remains besotted by his collections of exotic cars and stuffed big-game animals, which he tends in an eccentric "museum." His daredevilry did not end with his eligibility for Social Security. At sixty-eight, he broke an ankle in ten places and shattered six ribs in a spectacular motorcycle accident. (He immediately ordered a new motorcycle, which arrived while he was still in a wheelchair.) Not long afterward, he went to Alaska and bagged a moose. "Privileged Son" is very far from being any sort of authorized history or biography. McDougal devotes scores of pages to describing the many ways in which Otis is a perpetual adolescent, selfish and narcissistic, often callous and heedless toward his children and his old friends. The details are not without interest—far from it—but in the end none of this really matters. The man inherited a lousy newspaper and imbued it with such excellence that not even timorous editors, clueless publishers, and lamebrained C.E.O.s have been able to ruin it. ♦

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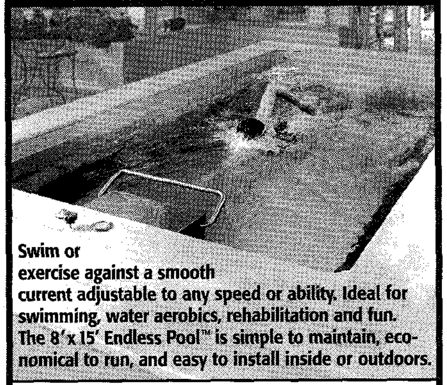

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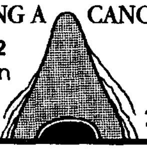

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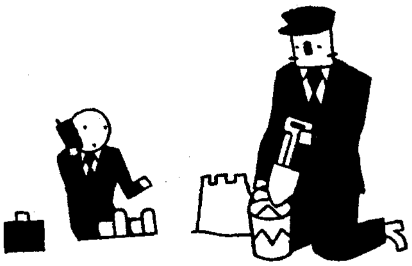
BRIEFLY NOTED

Border Crossing, *by Pat Barker (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $22).* When Tom Seymour, a psychiatrist in Newcastle, rescues a suicidal young man from the river behind his house, he doesn't recognize the mud-smeared face; after all, when Tom's testimony helped convict Danny Miller for the murder of an elderly woman, thirteen years earlier, the boy was only ten years old. Now Danny is free again—living under an assumed name, hunted by the press, anxious to make sense of his past—and he turns to his former enemy for help. But was their reunion really a coincidence? One is unsure whether or not Barker's latest novel is a thriller until its final pages—a knife-edge ambiguity underscores the author's impatience with platitudes about good and evil.

Fixer Chao, *by Han Ong (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $25).* Recruited into a baroque revenge scheme by a bitter writer, a gay Filipino hustler leaves behind the demimonde of Times Square dive bars for the glittering world of Manhattan society. As the feng-shui consultant Master Chao, he commands exorbitant fees, playing on his clients' guilt and insecurities while deviously arranging to mess up their *chi.* Casting a cool, satirical eye on the herd movement and exotic fetishism of the tastemaker class, this first novel is equally sensitive to Chao's ambivalent seduction by the new world he inhabits; paradoxically, in order for his con to work, he must believe that feng shui has the power to harm.

The Lost Children of Wilder, *by Nina Bernstein (Pantheon; $27.50).* For more than a century, New York City has generally looked after abused or neglected children by paying religious charities to provide foster care. In 1973, this policy sent a thirteen-year-old black girl named Shirley Wilder to reform school, because no charitable agency would take her in. Though the faith-based care providers were supported by public money, they behaved like private clubs, discriminating against black children. Marcia Lowry, the director of the A.C.L.U.'s Children's Rights Project, filed suit on Shirley's behalf, arguing that New York's arrangements were unconstitutional, and, in time, the charities modified their racial policies. Bernstein follows the case through fads in child psychology and shifts in political power down to 2000, and her account—gripping, capricious, and humane—is reminiscent of a Dickens novel.



The Flâneur, *by Edmund White (Bloomsbury/St. Martin's; $16.95).* For readers familiar with both the author and his subject, certain features of this ramble through Paris past and present will come as no surprise: the Place de la Concorde in 1793, the Café Flore in 1940, the cruising history of the Tuileries. But White's genius as a flâneur is revealed in his affinity for unexpected pleasures, and he includes many for our delectation, from his encounters with present-day royalists to Colette's one-time antidote for food poisoning: a stuffed cabbage and a currant tart.

Transfigurations, *by Jay Wright (Louisiana State; $24.95).* Lyric poetry is a way of compressing experience into a heightened moment, but what happens when the experience is one of wanting not to be contained? Wright is an African-American poet who has contended with this dilemma for the last thirty years, and the result is a substantial collection of work. His forcefully musical rhythms drive even poems of everyday experience—such as waiting outside church on a warm night—to a pleasingly contradictory transport. And the later, meditative poems are bound to the world by their attention to the sensual within the spiritual: "How like joy to come upon me / in remembering a head of hair / and the way water would caress / it."

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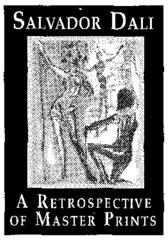

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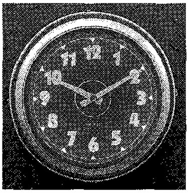

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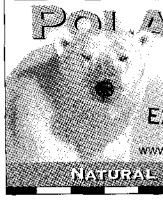

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

WOMEN ON THE RUN

Scenes from Teheran and Las Vegas.

BY DAVID DENBY

I have never seen women move the way they do in the Iranian film "The Circle." On the busy streets of Teheran, four frightened women, veiled, dressed in black, rush distractedly from block to block, store to store, telephone booth to newsstand. They crouch at the side of cars to avoid the police, dart down alleys, flee from dangerous places with black chadors held over their heads, as if flying under dark wings. At first, we may be puzzled by the frenetic rushing about—the women, seen one or two at a time, don't seem to have any clear goal. But after a while we realize that this is exactly the point. They are all caught in an agony of restlessness, looking for a place to hide in a society in which single women are constantly under scrutiny. "The Circle" is a devastating study in commonplace terror. There isn't a violent act in the movie, yet repression and violence condition the emotional atmosphere of every scene. All the women, including three subsidiary characters, either have spent time in prison or are heading there. We aren't told what the women have been charged with, but we can guess, from the kind of harassment we see them undergo, that their crime was exercising their normal rights as human beings. On the street, women walking alone are assumed to be whores—they are approached by men for sex or they are arrested by the police. To buy a bus ticket or stay in a hotel, a woman needs an ID card or police authorization. Almost nothing of any consequence is permitted. The sense of the movie is that an unauthorized woman has only provisional legitimacy as a citizen; she never really leaves prison.

The director, Jafar Panahi, had a great success in the West with his 1995 charmer, "The White Balloon," and it has been suggested by some Iranians that he fashions his movies to conform to Western tastes and prejudices—that "The Circle," for instance, presents, for Western disapproval, a grimmer picture of the situation of women in Iran than is actually the case. But it never occurred to me that "The Circle" was intended as a comprehensive documentary report or as anything but a highly distilled and aestheticized rendering of certain outrages. For there is no doubt that women are forbidden many things in Iran; and surely an artist has the right to underline and dramatize. "The Circle," which won the Golden Lion prize at last year's Venice Film Festival, has not been widely shown in Iran, which suggests that the authorities consider it incendiary.

For outsiders, "The Circle" feels like an angry accusation in the shape of a lyrical street movie. There are echoes of Italian neorealist cinema in the general forlornness and pained humanism of the approach, but Panahi has created strategies all his own. "The Circle" is a serial narrative. After a prelude, the first story begins with two desperate women in the street. Thrown into their confusion, our perspective limited by a handheld camera that keeps us very close to the characters, we keep looking for a specific plot, but what Panahi is getting at, through the accumulation of detail, is a common condition. One woman drops away, and the one who remains meets a new character, and so on, until the final scene, in which all the principal characters, at the end of a long day, are discovered sitting against the walls of a circular jail cell. Despite longueurs here and there, the cumulative power of "The Circle" is extraordinary.

Most of the movie's emotions are generated by the women's faces, especially by their darting, terrified eyes, which hold us through long-lasting shots. As much as possible, Panahi adheres to real time; he wants us to experience the actuality of these lives from one discomforting moment to the next. The women complain, but no one makes a speech, no one talks abstractly of rights or dignity. These are defenseless women who have fallen through the net. They are like conspirators without a program, underground rebels without ideas or leaders. They remain unawakened to everything but their own suffering. One woman, Nayereh, a single mother, abandons her little daughter on the street in the hope that some family will give the child a proper life. Panahi, holding a closeup on Nayereh, suggests neither that she is right nor wrong but only that her dilemma is inescapable and her society disastrously unjust.

Molly Parker plays a stripper in "The Center of the World." Photograph by Cliff Watts.

For all the complaints from the cultural right about sex in the movies, there actually isn't all that much of it—at least, not in American movies, and not in comparison to, say, thirty years ago, when the peel came off the grape and the strawberry split from the stem (mix your own fruit salad) with much greater frequency than now. What we've had a lot of in recent years is not eros but elbow-in-the-ribs, infantile bawdiness. Wayne Wang's explicit and eyeglass-fogging "The Center of the World" is a rarity—a movie whose dramatic life gets expressed through sexual emotion. The screenplay, which was written by Ellen Benjamin Wong, working from a story by Paul Auster, Siri Hustvedt, Miranda July, and Wang, begins with a sex-hungry nerd. Richard Longman (Peter Sarsgaard), rumpled and unshaven in his pizza-strewn apartment, lives entirely through a trio of computers on his desk. In a coffee shop, he strikes up an acquaintance with a stripper named Florence (Molly Parker), who then tantalizes him in an after-hours club. Dazzled, Richard offers her three days in Las Vegas and ten thousand dollars, and she agrees

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to go, but with serious conditions—no kissing on the lips, no penetration, no discussion of feelings, plus her own room and the maintenance of strict business hours from 10 P.M. to 2 A.M.

The movie turns into a ritualized battle between unequal partners. Wayne Wang photographs Molly Parker staring into a mirror as she puts on her makeup on the first night. A slender, pale young Canadian actress with freckles and red hair, Parker has a supple torso and great legs (she was trained as a dancer), and as she puts on her mask she assumes the power of the mask. She enters Richard's room wrapped in latex, but even when naked—or nearly naked—she is unattainable. Peter Sarsgaard, who was the surly bad guy in "Boys Don't Cry," is physically a more commonplace object, with a boyish handsome smile and tousled dark hair. But he captures Richard's bafflement; he gives a touching performance. Richard is paying, but he wants feeling, emotion, even love. The movie has a dreamy surface and the aura of a reverie, but there's a bit of suspense buried in the erotic cloud: Will Richard get a response out of Florence?

Wayne Wang, the director of "The Joy Luck Club" and "Smoke," shot the movie with a lightweight digital camera, which allows him to move in and stay close. Digital photography lacks the crisp elegance of film, but the slight blurriness works for a shacking-up movie in which the world hardly exists. At times, fantasy takes over altogether—Richard's fantasies, that is, since Florence, who remains a mysteriously distant object, isn't allowed to have any. In Vegas, the couple visits Jerri (Carla Gugino), a friend of Florence's, who is her opposite in every way—dark, fleshy, needy, a woman who is not a player in a game but a real person with a complicated sexual history. If the movie had stayed with Jerri, it might have arrived at a dangerous, even explosive, place. But she abruptly storms out, and the movie returns to the two principals, who aren't expressive or imaginative enough to break through the limits of their situation. The movie's conclusion is dim and unsatisfying, but its failure could lead, oddly, to the picture's success as a date movie. Young couples who see it may be eager to turn into filmmakers themselves and dream up very different, and better, endings at home. ♦

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THE THEATRE

OUT OF THE PAST

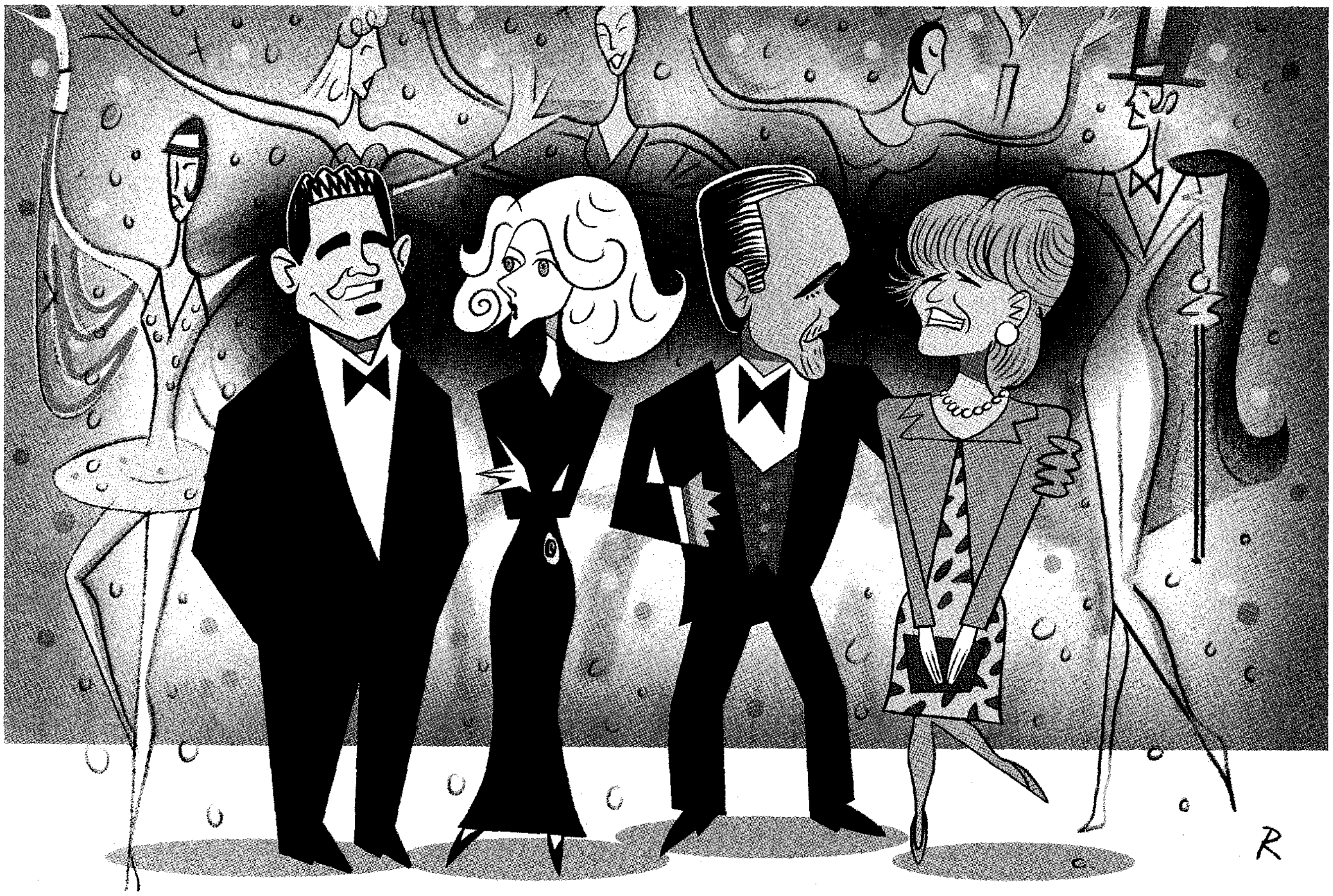
"Follies" takes on memory and the musical.

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

It's entirely fitting that the Roundabout's revival—the first Broadway revival—of Stephen Sondheim and James Goldman's "Follies" is at the Belasco, a theatre that is said to be haunted by the ghost of its namesake, the impresario David Belasco. "Follies" is peopled by ghosts, both seen and unseen, and it could also be said to be haunted by the ghost of its original incarnation, which opened thirty years and one day before this revival did. Thirty years is an interval that echoes in the musical, which is set on a night in 1971, at a reunion of performers from the Ziegfeld-like Weismann Follies, thirty years after the curtain came down on the show for the last time. And "Follies" itself plays a role in American musical theatre similar to that of "Show Boat," which débuted approximately thirty years after the start of the twentieth century and, like "Follies," seemed to incorporate everything there was to say up to its time about musical theatre and the larger mythical world of which it is a part, American show business.

The original "Follies," which was directed by Harold Prince and Michael Bennett, with choreography by Bennett, was the most expensive musical ever mounted on Broadway. The liner notes to a glorious concert version recorded at Avery Fisher Hall in 1985—itself almost as legendary as the 1971 Broadway production, partly because its A-list assemblage of talent included Barbara Cook, Elaine Stritch, and Carol Burnett, among others, and partly because it presented the score in its entirety (the original-cast album did not)—say that the show's "lavish production concept . . . makes a Broadway revival virtually impossible." But with a different approach it was possible, and I suspect, without having seen the original, that little that was important has been lost in the current, more modest production, since the show's real grandeur lies in its imaginative structure and in the unfolding of its lyrically rich, resonant songs. The cast on the stage of the Belasco may be smaller, the orchestra may have fewer musicians, and the costumes may be less opulent, but the interplay of the show's composite parts has not changed, and, under the direction of Matthew Warchus, the relentless, unblinking intelligence of "Follies" is intact. (In any case, when it comes to opulence, that costly quality has increasingly become the preserve of Disney, with all that that implies, and let Disney have it. Theatregoers who have enjoyed the stripped-down Encores! musical revivals, at City Center, for the past seven years know how much can be achieved even with minimal production.)

Sally and Phyllis (Judith Ivey and Blythe Danner) are two of the former Weismann Girls who have come back to



ROBERT RISKO

Middle-aged crazy: Treat Williams, Blythe Danner, Gregory Harrison, and Judith Ivey in Stephen Sondheim's "Follies."

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the Follies' theatre this one last time—it is now practically a ruin and is about to be demolished and replaced by a parking lot—and they've got their husbands in tow. Sally is married to Buddy (Treat Williams), a travelling salesman, and they live a quiet life in Arizona; Phyllis is married to Ben (Gregory Harrison), a well-known political figure and author, and they lead a more glamorous, cosmopolitan life. It doesn't take long for us to see that neither couple is happy: Phyllis and Ben enter bickering, and Buddy and Sally are clearly tense—he didn't want her to come at all, because he knows that she used to be, and may still be, in love with Ben. Sally herself is so nervous about seeing Ben that in her first number, which she sings to him, she says, "Don't look at me." In the same song, she expresses her ambivalence about the whole proceeding: "Look at these people, aren't they eerie? Look at this party, isn't it dreary? I'm so glad I came." Standing together at the bottom of a metal stairway that goes from the middle of the stage up to a catwalk at the back—a stairway not to paradise but to harsh reality—the couples recall their younger days, when "life was fun but oh, so intense," when "everything was possible and nothing made sense." As they reminisce, their younger selves appear onstage before them, energetic, flirtatious, the girls arguing playfully with their boyfriends. Faced with this, the older couples avert their eyes—now in their late forties and early fifties, they can hardly bear to look back at a time when everything still seemed ahead of them.

Middle age looms large in "Follies"; Sondheim was forty-one when the show was first produced, and there is much in it that will cause anyone who recently started wearing reading glasses to nod—or, more likely, recoil—in recognition. (At one point, Phyllis says to Buddy, "Ben and I don't do things anymore. We say them.") But "Follies," while it recognizes the inevitability of loss and regret, does not wallow in the past. A song about being stuck between who you wanted to be and who you actually became ("The Road You Didn't Take") and one about putting on a façade of happiness to hide unfulfillment ("In Buddy's Eyes") sandwich a silent dance number ("Danse d'Amour," which, like the rest of the show, is well choreographed by Kathleen Marshall) that implies not only that the show must go on but that if you let it go on it can transcend those disappointments. A young, lithe, and fairly generic couple performing a pas de deux are joined onstage by an old couple who are here for the reunion (Marge Champion and Donald Saddler), and who dance gracefully and with precision in front of their youthful ghosts. Their moves do not exactly mirror those of the younger couple. How could they? There are sixty years—a whole lifetime—between them. But the older couple make gravity work in their favor; they dance together as two human beings, not as two perfect but easily replaceable instruments. Champion and Saddler, both of whom are in the ballpark of eighty, are radiant; there is something in their eyes that is missing from the youths behind them. When the young man carries his partner off the stage on his shoulder, it's about firm muscles; when Champion and Saddler glide off the dance floor, his arm wrapped around her, the counterpoint is deeply moving. He can't carry her off the stage, but he doesn't need to; their movement expresses their love and support for each other. It's the most romantic moment in the show, and one of the most articulate.

Of course, articulateness is a hallmark of "Follies"; it's Sondheim's statement about the music of his own boyhood and his effort to carve something new out of the musical traditions he inherited. It's also a tribute to those traditions and to the people who have lived through them. Some people who saw the original production felt that there was an element of cruelty in the casting of the oldest performers, who play Follies stars of the generation prior to that of Phyllis and Sally, but no such thought would cross anyone's mind here. All of the AARPsters bring depth and shine to the show; while Phyllis and Ben and Buddy and Sally curse the darkness, their elders add some necessary light. In addition to Champion and Saddler, there's Betty

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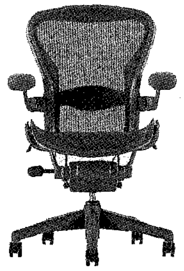
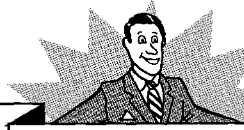
Garrett, a member of M-G-M's late-era musical-comedy stable, singing "Broadway Baby"—not with the toughness you might associate with the song if you've heard Elaine Stritch sing it but with a wide-eyed innocence. (Garrett, in a light-blue pants suit, shimmies across the stage at one point, and then grabs her back—a joke you see coming a mile away but laugh at anyway, because you are so delighted and impressed that the eighty-one-year-old Garrett doesn't actually *need* to grab her back.) Polly Bergen, in stately dark green, strikes the right salty tone for "I'm Still Here," the ultimate seen-and-done-it-all anthem; and Joan Roberts, the original Laurey in "Oklahoma!," in 1943, takes elegant hold of the stage, and the audience, when she sings an operetta duet with her younger self.

But "Follies" is carried largely by the four principals who make up the miserable couples. None of them are known primarily for their work in musicals, though they can all sing well enough. (You do pine a bit for Barbara Cook when Judith Ivey sings the sad, sublime "Losing My Mind.") Virtuosity alone, in any case, would not be appropriate to most of "Follies"—its ideas require actors, not just singers and dancers. Perhaps Warchus's emphasis on the drama—and a grim drama it is—robs the musical of some needed show-biz soul. But the casting pays off for the most part, and, in the pastiche numbers that form the overheated, Felliniesque peak of the second act, the contrast between the characters' lives and the musical forms that both mock them and give them expression is as clear as Sondheim could wish it to be.

"Follies," by its very nature, is sure to be as controversial this time around as it was thirty years ago. There are those who have a taste for shows that lead you to the truth of things a little more indirectly, a little less stringently, and that leave room for you to glow and swell with helpless love. If you are suffused with that feeling when "Follies" is over, you have, I think, missed Sondheim's point about the things we must learn to leave behind. It's possible to think that "Follies" is a great show and yet not entirely love it; to think that it's invaluable and yet not feel embraced by it. You may walk out of the theatre feeling a little mixed up inside, as though you had just received the most unforgettable parting kiss of your life. ♦

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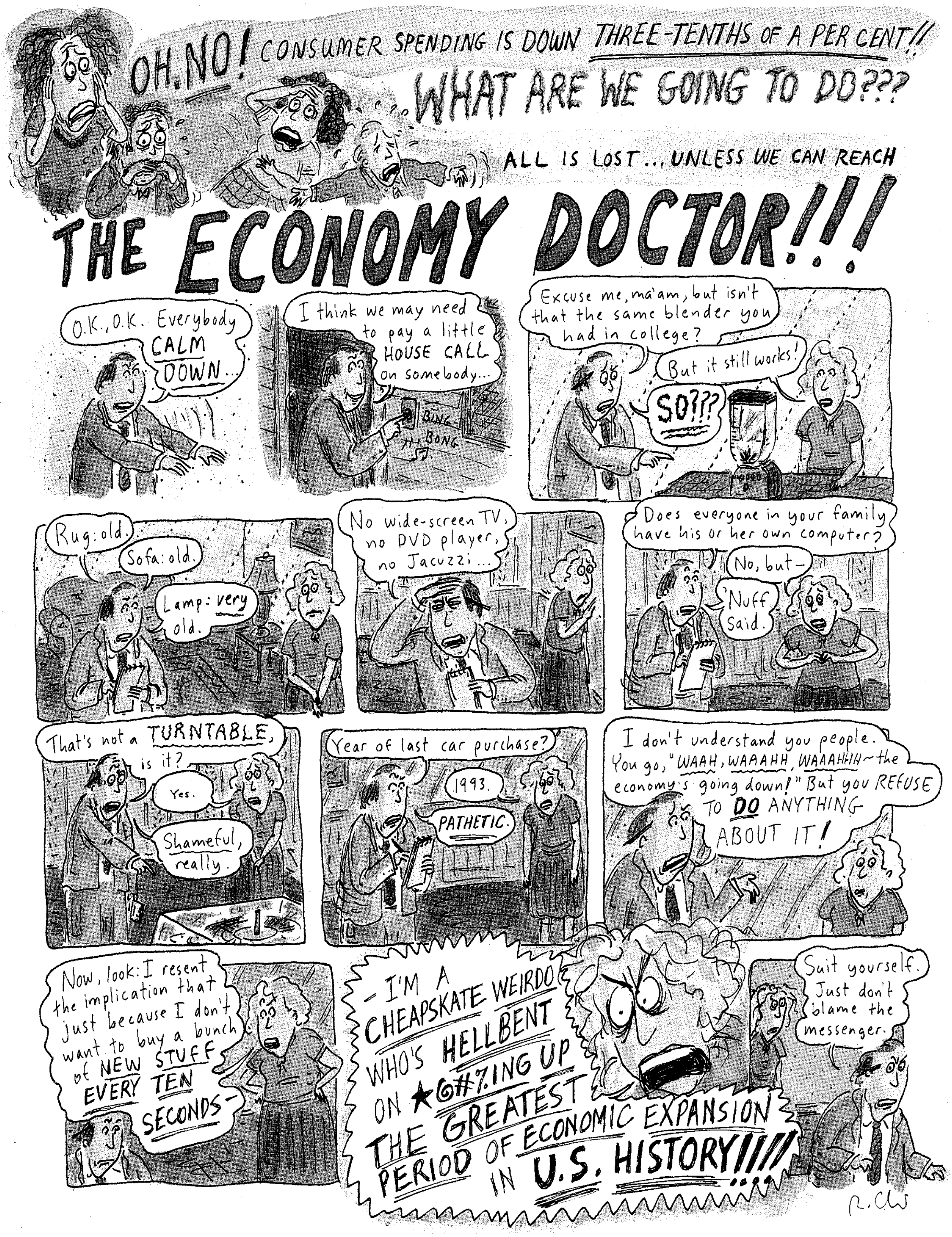
THE BACK PAGE BY ROZ CHAST


OH, NO! CONSUMER SPENDING IS DOWN THREE-TENTHS OF A PER CENT!!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO???
ALL IS LOST... UNLESS WE CAN REACH
THE ECONOMY DOCTOR!!!
O.K., O.K. Everybody CALM DOWN...
I think we may need to pay a little HOUSE CALL on somebody...
BING-BONG
Excuse me, ma'am, but isn't that the same blender you had in college?
But it still works!
SO???
Rug: old.
Sofa: old.
Lamp: very old.
No wide-screen TV, no DVD player, no Jacuzzi...
Does everyone in your family have his or her own computer?
No, but—
'Nuff said.
That's not a TURNTABLE, is it?
Yes.
Shameful, really.
Year of last car purchase?
1993.
PATHETIC.
I don't understand you people. You go, "WAAH, WAAAHH, WAAAHHH—the economy's going down!" But you REFUSE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!
Now, look: I resent the implication that just because I don't want to buy a bunch of NEW STUFF EVERY TEN SECONDS—
—I'M A CHEAPSKATE WEIRDO WHO'S HELLBENT ON ★@#%ING UP THE GREATEST PERIOD OF ECONOMIC EXPANSION IN U.S. HISTORY!!!!
Suit yourself. Just don't blame the messenger.

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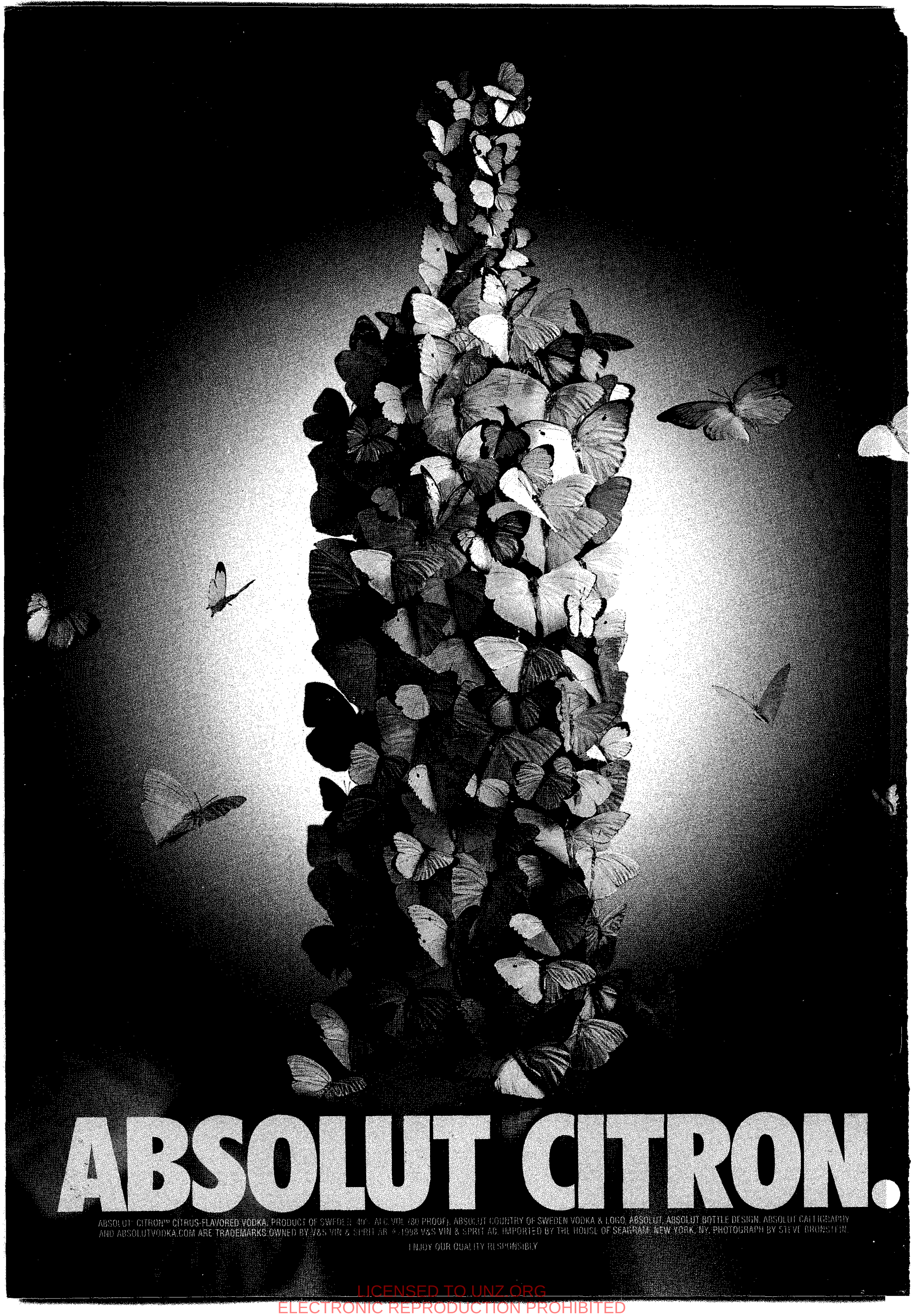

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